

PAUL TSONGAS AND THE BATTLES OVER ENERGY
AND THE ENVIRONMENT, 1974-1980

By

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To the Faculty of Washington State University:

The members of the Committee appointed to examine the dissertation of DANE MORRIS NETHERTON find it satisfactory and recommend that it be accepted.

Chair

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Abstract

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This dissertation examines the political career of Paul Tsongas of Lowell, Massachusetts, from 1974 to 1980, with particular attention to his efforts to reconcile regional, environmental, and economic interests during his two terms in the U.S. House of Representatives and his first two years in the U.S. Senate. The national debates over energy policy during the late 1970s present an essential context for understanding Tsongas's lasting place in American political history.

The energy crisis created a divisive legislative battleground during the late 1970s, forming the backdrop of Tsongas's first congressional election in 1974 and his two terms as U.S. Representative. Tsongas played an active part in congressional consideration of energy issues through his seat in the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, his participation in the Ad Hoc Committee (created to shepherd President Jimmy Carter's National Energy Plan through the House of Representatives), and his efforts to locate a Solar Energy Research Center in Massachusetts. Energy issues also formed a backdrop to Tsongas's other accomplishments as a Representative: his key role in the creation of the Lowell National Historical Park, the economic revitalization of Greater Lowell, and the first

congressional hearings to examine the contribution of carbon dioxide to global warming. Throughout his career, he worked to promote a rational and responsible regional energy policy for Massachusetts and New England. In his first two years in the Senate, energy issues were intimately connected to Tsongas's role in the Chrysler Bailout bill, the Solar Energy and Energy Conservation Bank Act of 1980, and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. Notably, he also worked hard to push President Carter towards a renewed effort to deal with energy problems.

This dissertation draws upon the extensive primary sources available in the Tsongas Collections at The University of Massachusetts Lowell's Center for Lowell History as well as interviews with Tsongas's aides. It also makes use of newspaper accounts, the Congressional Record, Tsongas's published works, and a variety of secondary sources.

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INTRODUCTION

Paul Efthemios Tsongas was born on February 14, 1941, to Greek immigrants in Lowell, Massachusetts. He worked hard in Lowell's public schools. Years later, teachers at Lowell High School still remembered his diligence and aptitude. Competitive by nature, he wanted to play sports like other kids. But he had to help out at his father's dry cleaning service after school, bending wire into hangers, making deliveries, and contributing to the family business. After graduation the money he and the family had saved, supplemented with student loans, allowed him to study at Dartmouth, which offered new opportunities. He devoted much less time and effort to his studies at Dartmouth. However, he did learn to swim—in a required physical education class. He loved swimming because it so rewarded individual effort, and he joined Dartmouth's intercollegiate swim team, where he discovered that he thrived on competition. An idealist, he joined the Peace Corps after graduation and spent two years teaching English in Wolisso, Ethiopia. A summer internship with a Republican legislator convinced him that he could combine his love of competition with his idealism. He studied at Yale University School of Law, graduated in 1967, and passed the Massachusetts Bar in 1968. He returned to Lowell, where he began a legal practice and a meteoric political career. He rose in less than ten years from the Lowell City Council (1969-1972) to the Middlesex County Commission (1973-1975) to the House of Representatives in 1974 and in 1978, to the U.S. Senate, where he served one term.¹

Paul Tsongas will be remembered for many different accomplishments. Many recall his contributions to the economic revival of his home town. While he did not turn the city

¹ Paul Tsongas, The Road From Here (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1981).

around single-handedly, he coordinated and organized a number of efforts that reshaped the city. Tsongas arguably had more to do with the city's economic renaissance during the 1970s and 1980s than any other single individual. Lowell, Massachusetts, is now home to the Tsongas Arena, a large venue for concerts, hockey games and conventions. The University of Massachusetts Lowell features a Tsongas Industrial History Center, in collaboration with the Lowell National Historical Park, which teaches school children of several different grade levels about the history of their industrial town. On the national level, Tsongas is also remembered for his key role in the Chrysler bailout legislation and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 (ANILCA).

This work argues that Tsongas's many accomplishments are best understood in the context of the energy crisis. How we obtain and use energy shapes every part of our lives. As the main source of energy in the United States, oil companies played, and continue to play, a major role in domestic and international politics. Although many blamed the energy crisis of the 1970s on the oil companies, it was probably guilt by association. The major oil companies certainly benefited from the crisis, and they actively and visibly pursued acceptable solutions in the political arena. But major oil companies also made modern industrial society possible. Major philanthropic organizations like the Rockefeller Foundation and the Pew Charitable Trusts originated in oil profits. Dartmouth's gymnasium, where Paul Tsongas trained, had been built with money from George Bissel, who was, according to energy scholar Daniel Yergin, "more than anyone else, responsible for the creation of the oil industry." Tsongas's rise to national political office occurred in a time and place where energy issues assumed center stage. Consequently, the energy crisis shaped Tsongas's political career by presenting opportunities that would not have existed in

the absence of energy crisis. It also presented Tsongas and his colleagues with problems. Energy shortages increased the inflation rate, which put pressure on interest rates, which in turn constricted credit, causing a recession that for some areas of the U.S. lasted until the mid-1980s. The energy crisis also put considerable pressure on environmentalism. The nascent environmentalist movement found itself confronted for the first time with heavy pressure to consider the effects of environmental protection upon employment growth and, in certain geographic areas, the ability to heat homes in the winter. Because energy is such a fundamental and pervasive force in society, shortages impacted political decisions on transportation issues, industrial policy, deficit spending, banking issues, and a wide variety of other areas as well.²

U.S. energy problems began in the early 1970s as the culmination of several trends. The environmental movement had pushed utilities to convert from coal-fired plants to cleaner sources like natural gas and oil. This put added pressure on the domestic supply of oil, which had begun to decrease around 1970, just as suppliers in the Middle East began successfully to demand a larger share of oil revenues. These forces combined to push world oil prices higher. In turn, higher oil prices exacerbated the stress after 1963 that simultaneous pursuit of Great Society programs and the Vietnam War placed upon the general price level in the United States. President Richard Nixon, fearing his prospects for reelection in 1972, capped domestic oil prices so that he could pursue expansionary monetary policies while combating an election-year recession. Once capped, the artificially low price of oil stimulated energy demand at the same time it choked domestic production.

² Franklin Tugwell, *The Energy Crisis and the American Political Economy: Politics and Markets in the Management of Natural Resources*, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1988), 115-230; Daniel Yergin, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money, and Power* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991), 28.

All of these factors put increasing stress upon an energy production and distribution regime that had been designed to handle excess supply, instead of scarcity. The subsequent adjustments shook the United States until just after the end of the Seventies.³

In 1974, Paul Tsongas became one of seventy-five freshmen Democrats elected in the wake of the Watergate scandal. Political scientist Burdett Loomis has characterized Tsongas's congressional class, the class of 1974, as "entrepreneurial." Loomis meant that Tsongas and his cohort "hooked their careers to ideas, issues, and problems—and prospective solutions." Tsongas fit this description and initially focused his career upon the economic problems of his congressional district. As economic conditions there improved, he increasingly set his sights upon the energy crisis. Since many of his colleagues offered solutions to energy problems that would have damaged the environment, Tsongas increasingly focused upon the problems of environmental degradation.⁴

Tsongas also differed from peers in his congressional class in other important ways. Political analyst William Schneider has argued that the class of 1974 "adopted the view that political issues are problems that have right answers, as opposed to conflicts of interests that have to be reconciled." Yet Tsongas was well aware of the importance of reconciling conflicting interests, as was readily apparent in his work on energy policy. The energy crisis created strains between wide varieties of opposed interest groups. It pitted consumers against producers, independent oil producers against multinational oil producers, and energy-producing regions of the country against those without energy resources. Nor did proposed

³ David Glasner, Politics, Prices, and Petroleum (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1985), 89-115; Yergin, The Prize, 590-596.

⁴ Burdett Loomis cited in William Schneider, "J.F.K.'s Children: The Class of '74," The Atlantic Monthly, March 1989, 42.

solutions lie neatly along partisan lines. Tsongas effectively balanced energy, the economy, and the environment simultaneously with the interests of future generations. He was effective in energy policy because he carefully and studiously avoided offending the interest groups fighting over energy policy. He also worked to locate, inform, and rally a constituency supportive of environmentally sound solutions to energy problems. Tsongas found such a constituency in the high tech sector for solar power research and development. And he found a constituency for conservation measures among the stakeholders—power companies and state and local governments. Tsongas championed legislation, notably the Solar and Conservation Bank Act, which benefited both interests.⁵

Conservation offered immediate benefits to consumers. Moreover, it was the best solution to the many problems of the energy crisis, providing “more new energy to the nation than any other source” during the 1970s, according to one comprehensive study. Not only did conservation help preserve energy and the environment for future generations, but it was also the only appropriate solution for the crisis that did not make the problem worse through creating more energy to waste. Tsongas was at the forefront of legislative efforts to support conservation.⁶

Chapter One examines Tsongas’s 1974 campaign for the U.S. Congress. It argues that the Watergate scandal and the energy crisis formed a backdrop that allowed Tsongas to challenge effectively the credibility of the incumbent Republican opponent. During the campaign, Tsongas observed the interplay of economy, energy, and environment for the first

⁵ Schneider, “J.F.K.’s Children,” 42 (“adopted”); Barbara Kellerman, The Political Presidency (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 210.

⁶ Don E. Kash and Robert W. Rycoff, U.S. Energy Policy: Crisis and Complacency (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), 238.

time, as his city considered the effects of an oil refinery. Tsongas could not oppose the refinery idea since too many in town supported it. He could not back it, however, since doing so would have aided his opponent. So he watched and learned from his opponent's mistakes. While near the end of the race Tsongas gained the support of some powerful figures in the Democratic Party, he believed that his prospects for success would rest on his accomplishments. He cobbled together an economic development plan for his district that ignored the refinery issue entirely. And he won the election.

Chapter Two discusses the unfolding of Tsongas's career during his first congressional term, from 1975-1977, and his two jobs programs—the Job Resources Section (JRS) and the urban park proposal—as well as his growing interest and involvement in energy issues. Tsongas diligently pursued the park proposal through his assignment to the Committee of Interior and Insular Affairs, eventually securing funding for a park plan. Through casework, JRS became a constant, visible reminder of Tsongas's active promotion of economic development in the district. JRS also promoted the urban park proposal, leading to the creation of a source of private capital directed to economic development in support of the park, the Lowell Development Financial Corporation. Tsongas's active participation in energy issues on the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs led to other opportunities as well. A JRS staff member discovered an opportunity created by the energy crisis—the Solar Energy Research Institute (SERI). SERI offered the prospect of federal funds for his district. It also offered the opportunity to collaborate with many of the corporate leaders in the district's high-technology industry—a vital component of the area's economic, and political base.

Chapter Three examines Tsongas's pursuit of economic development initiatives and his increasing involvement in energy issues and international affairs during his second congressional term, 1977-1979. Tsongas successfully shepherded legislation for the Lowell National Historical Park through Congress. He participated in the Ad-Hoc Committee established to steer Jimmy Carter's National Energy Plan through the House of Representatives. And his experiences with the Ad-Hoc committee led him to work towards a regional energy plan, which he initiated through the New England Energy Congress, a comprehensive effort to gather together stakeholders to discuss rational solutions to the region's energy dilemmas. His ambition and interest in participating more fully in foreign affairs led him to abandon a safe congressional seat to challenge Edward Brooke's seat in the U.S. Senate, despite the fact that doing so alienated many blacks and traditional Democrats.

Chapter Four covers 1979, Tsongas's first year in the Senate. Tsongas's senate staff promoted economic development in Massachusetts, but Tsongas was not involved as actively in their efforts. He devoted more of his time to energy issues. Initially, he tried to push the Carter administration into addressing the resurgent energy crisis. Carter's eventual response seemed harmful to the environment and to the New England economy. Consequently, Tsongas worked toward legislation that would undermine Carter's synfuels proposal and channel support to solar energy research and conservation. As a member of the Senate, Tsongas also used his enlarged audience, and the growing anti-nuclear movement, to pressure utility companies into investing in conservation. Finally, he worked to save Chrysler Corporation—domestic manufacturer of the most fuel-efficient vehicles—despite the fact that his plan for saving the company directly alienated the labor movement, a key source of support for the traditional Democratic Party.

Chapter Five interprets Tsongas's efforts in 1980, the final year of the energy crisis. Tsongas was a key figure in the negotiations for the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980. Because he had become so skeptical of the Democratic Party and had spent much of his career building a coalition that did not rely upon some elements of the traditional Democratic constituencies like labor, Tsongas foresaw the repudiation of Democrats in the 1980 election. He pressed for an Alaska lands bill even when all the other figures in the debate were arguing for provisions that would certainly have made passage of the bill impossible that year. As a consequence, he managed to get an acceptable bill to the Senate floor. Without Tsongas's efforts, a new presidential administration and congressional leaders much less sympathetic to the concept of public interest lands would have determined the final disposition of the Alaska holdings.

CHAPTER ONE

TSONGAS FOR CONGRESS, 1974: THE CANDID CAMPAIGN

Early in 1972, in an unexpected turn of events, Republican Congressman F. Bradford Morse, of Massachusetts' Fifth Congressional District, accepted a position as Undersecretary of the United Nations. His announcement stunned Lowell City Councilor Paul Efthemios Tsongas, a local attorney. Tsongas expected to follow in Morse's footsteps, eventually. After serving with the Peace Corps in 1962 he interned with Morse in Washington. Later, he returned to Lowell, his hometown, to begin his political career—partially because people there recognized his name. His father had emblazoned the sides of vans of the family's dry-cleaning business with the name for decades. Beginning with the Lowell City Council, Paul Tsongas steadily built a political career with the goal of replacing Morse as Congressman of the Fifth District. Earlier the same day of Morse's announcement the State Democratic Caucus chose Tsongas and two others to run on a reform slate for the Middlesex County Commission. Tsongas realized that he could not back out. But if he won, a four-year term as Commissioner would allow Morse's replacement to entrench his or her hold firmly upon the district's voters. Tsongas felt he was the victim of some extremely bad timing, but he did not yet feel ready to run for Congress. He had hoped that two years would prove long enough to prepare for the biggest race of his life.¹

The place and time of Tsongas's first congressional election in 1974 profoundly shaped his career. Richard M. Nixon played an important role in that election in Massachusetts' Fifth District, and many remember that the contest hinged upon the Watergate scandal. But

¹ Robert Innis interview, 31 October 2003; transcript of Mehmed Ali interview with Nicola Tsongas, 11 February 2003, University of Massachusetts Center for Lowell History (CLH, hereafter).

the Watergate cover-up provided a general backdrop for the election rather than a direct influence. It formed a narrative frame through which voters observed the two candidates: Tsongas and Republican incumbent Paul Cronin. The candidates differed substantially in two interrelated respects—their candor and their plans for economic development in the district. The southern part of the district, with a high concentration of high-tech and military contracting firms, blamed some of their more recent problems on what some analysts called Nixon's revenge—a perceived systematic decline in federal contracts in Massachusetts, the only state to give its electoral votes to Democratic presidential candidate George McGovern in 1972. The larger industrial cities in the northern part of the district, Lowell and Lawrence, and the towns surrounding them (often termed Greater Lowell) had suffered pervasive unemployment throughout the twentieth century as electrical technology allowed textile manufacturers to seek lower labor costs in the South and overseas. But the energy crisis of the early 1970s added inflation and increased heating oil costs to the economic problems of Greater Lowell. Soon after Paul Cronin, Tsongas's eventual opponent, began to represent the Fifth District, Cronin sought to bring an oil refinery to Greater Lowell, which he believed would help alleviate the heating oil shortages and expand employment. For the southern part of the district he hoped to increase the amount of federal defense contracts. Cronin's efforts to bring a refinery proved unsuccessful and he eventually found himself downplaying the refinery issue. Tsongas's integrity, hard work, and ability to seize opportunities allowed him to question Cronin's truthfulness without appearing to oppose a refinery. The campaign hinged upon credibility, and the public

assessed candidates' trustworthiness largely without reference to their relationship to, or positions on, the Nixon and Gerald Ford administrations.²

In 1972, as Tsongas campaigned for Middlesex County commissioner he carefully watched the race in the Fifth District. He soon learned the pitfalls of entering such an open contest. Citizens of the Fifth District later remembered the 1972 race as the murder-suicide of the local Democratic Party. The primary ballot featured eight of the district's most prominent Democrats. Infighting and divided loyalties among Lowell's politicians allowed an outsider, John Forbes Kerry—who had moved to the district after an aborted attempt at the Third Congressional District earlier that year and a failed attempt at the Fourth District in 1970—to emerge victorious. Although well-funded for the general election, Kerry faced powerful opposition—the Committee to Reelect the President (CREEP). Indeed, President Richard Nixon took an intense, personal interest in the defeat of Kerry, who had been a vocal and effective speaker against Nixon's Vietnam War policies. Later investigations traced only a small amount of money from CREEP to Kerry's opponent, Paul Cronin (only \$1,000), but Nixon associates worked toward a Cronin victory by agreeing to lift an SEC investigation on another candidate, Roger Durkin. In exchange, Durkin filed as an independent candidate, spent \$50,000 of his family's money red-baiting Kerry, and then dropped out of the race the week before the election with an impassioned speech asking his supporters to vote for Cronin. Later investigations pointed to CREEP, too, for framing Kerry's brother Cameron. An anonymous phone call to Cameron sent him to campaign headquarters to investigate tampering with campaign phone lines. When Cameron broke

² For the declining economic base of the northern Fifth District see Larry Gross, The Course of Industrial Decline: The Boott Cotton Mills of Lowell, Massachusetts, 1835-1955 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); and Ross Gittel, Renewing Cities, (Princeton New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992), 67-72.

into the warehouse next door (which housed Kerry phone lines) to investigate, he found that it also contained those of a primary opponent two doors away. Police arrived to arrest him.³

Many saw Kerry as an outsider, and in the absence of party unity, he garnered little local support. Residents of Lowell, the largest city in the Fifth, resented outsiders generally, calling even people who had lived there for decades “blow-ins.” Kerry had been born in the district, but the area’s most powerful voice, Lowell Sun editor Clement Costello, helped to stamp Kerry as a “blow-in” and contrasted Kerry with Cronin, who was both free of “the stigma that many attach to Kerry’s name,” and a local. Costello pointed out that the bulk of Kerry’s campaign funds had come from donors in New York, Boston and other places outside the district.⁴

The Sun stepped up attacks on Kerry as the campaign drew to a close. Costello built upon Durkin’s advertisements with editorials that painted Kerry as an armed revolutionary, implied that under his leadership the Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW) members carried weapons (although they started doing that after Kerry left), and called VVAW a communist-front organization. The powerful editor believed that Kerry’s anti-war position would bring unwanted attention to the district, concluding that, “if Mr. Kerry’s name is mud in Washington under President Nixon, we don’t want to see that mud wind up in the face of the people of the Fifth District.” Despite spending nearly \$300,000 on the campaign, the third highest total for a congressional campaign that year, Kerry lost the race. On election night 1972 President Nixon first reveled in his own landslide reelection victory, then became sullen when his big victory failed to bring in very many House Republicans on his coattails.

³ The Village Voice, 7 June 1973.

⁴ Lowell Sun, 1 November 1972.

Then, according to the Village Voice, “around 4 a.m., word came down from Massachusetts that Kerry had lost to a bland Republican candidate, Paul Cronin. Nixon was ‘elated,’ and, according to one source on the scene, called it a night. As he left, for the first time since early evening, he was smiling.”⁵

Tsongas knew that he would not be able to count on Costello’s support when he eventually challenged Cronin. And he was no doubt hoping that a backlash would force Costello to realize he had gone too far. A group of local clergymen joined the Lowell Central Labor Council in protesting the “biased attacks” on Kerry’s patriotism. Others challenged the paper’s generalizations about the opinions of the people of the Fifth District and Kerry’s “blow-in” status. The paper published half an editorial page of reader letters saying that Costello should be “ashamed,” that they were “appalled,” and that they were canceling their subscriptions. The Kerry backers in the area claimed that Costello’s editorials destroyed Kerry’s campaign. Kerry later called the media “the most important entity in American government today,” asserting that “they can make or break . . . candidates at will.”⁶

While Cronin settled into his new role as congressman, Richard Nixon continued to deal with the growing energy crisis. Nixon’s message to Congress the week of April 22, 1973 gave Lowell Sun editor Costello new economic development ideas for Lowell. Costello pointedly highlighted three of Nixon’s proposals: increased oil exploration along the Atlantic coast, tax incentives to encourage the building of new refineries, and legislation to permit the construction of deep water ports. Costello argued that the solution to Lowell’s long-term

⁵ The Village Voice, 7 June 1973.

⁶ Lowell Sun, 1 (“biased”), 2 (“ashamed,” “appalled”), 3 November 1972, 5 November 1974 (“the most”).

economic decline was to build a refinery complex. Freshman Republican Paul Cronin adopted the refinery idea as his own. In late June of 1973 Cronin traveled to Benicia, California, to visit its Exxon refinery complex, saying that it was “what he would like to see in Lowell,” “odorless,” and “far from being an eye-sore.” Exxon had constructed the Benicia refinery during an earlier period of high unemployment, piping in the oil to process, as Lowell would have to do. Cronin began to pitch the refinery proposal to oil companies, promoting the area’s natural advantages.⁷

In the summer of 1973 many areas of New England looked to refinery development as a way out of unemployment problems and high heating oil costs. The Massachusetts Port Authority held a public meeting to discuss a deep-water port for the Boston area with consultants from Arthur D. Little and Raytheon, who recommended the building of a deep-water port and refineries. The consultants estimated that the port and refineries could bring 500 jobs and an additional indirect employment benefit of 1,500 more. They also noted that the impact on state tax revenue could be as much as \$20 million per year.⁸

In the months leading up to the 1974 election, the prospect of a refinery, and its attendant issues of deep water ports, oil drilling on the outer continental shelf in the George’s Bank, pipelines, decreased taxes, and increased employment captured the imagination of many of the area’s politicians and business leaders. Cronin urged members of the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Lowell to form a task force to bring a refinery to Lowell. The chamber asked the congressman’s assistance, as well as that of Lowell Technological Institute, and invited Edward J. King, the executive director of the

⁷ Lowell Sun, 22 April and 1 July (qtns.) 1973.

⁸ Lowell Sun, 10 July 1973; The Boston Globe, 10 July 1973.

Massachusetts Port Authority, to a luncheon to discuss such a project. Local officials attended meetings in Boston whenever port, drilling, or refinery issues were discussed, often emphasizing the issue of location, whether or not it appeared on the agenda. The regional director of the EPA supported Nixon's proposals, but Lowell city manager James L. Sullivan indicated that he would call for a referendum on the idea before beginning any "active negotiations" with oil companies, since several proposed refinery projects had met active opposition from environmentalists. City councilors in Lowell and selectmen in Dracut held informational meetings and pushed for a feasibility study. Republican Governor Francis Sargent, visiting Lowell in November, called it "a likely area for a refinery," but like many outside depressed Lowell, he favored more study, particularly of environmental impacts. State Representative Raymond Rourke, echoing the sentiments of many in Greater Lowell, dismissed environmental problems as secondary to the main issue of economic revitalization. He characterized environmental opponents as people who would "object to the resurrection because it might destroy the cemetery."⁹

Tsongas watched with interest as Cronin championed the refinery. Through the winter months Congressman Cronin pushed deep-water port proposals in the House Interior Subcommittee on the Environment and authored bills to give deepwater port preferences to areas most hurt by the energy crisis. State Representative Raymond F. Rourke advocated deepwater port and refinery construction favoring areas with high unemployment. And speaking before the annual meeting of the Massachusetts Selectmen Association, Cronin urged selectmen to bid for new Massachusetts refineries, touting their tax advantages. In mid-December, Cronin boarded the Queen Elizabeth II, chartered by

⁹ Lowell Sun, 10 July; 18, 19, 20 ("active") September 1973; 4, 5 October 1973; 6, 14 ("object"), 15 ("likely") November 1973; Boston Globe, 17 September 1973.

Shaheen Oil of New York, to celebrate the dedication of the first oil refinery built in North America in eight years—in Newfoundland. Cronin discussed the Lowell-Dracut refinery proposal with Raytheon Company executives and others whom the Lowell Sun described as “every government, industrial, business and banking leader of the oil producing nations with interests in refineries, pipelines, off-shore oil terminals, oil tank storage or crude oil production.” The celebrants, including three other congressmen, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, and twenty other heads of state, planned to visit two refineries in Newfoundland under construction.¹⁰

Tsongas also noted the obstacles Cronin faced in his quest for a refinery. Some began to fear that Cronin’s relationships with “oil magnates” might compromise his support and that his loyalties to the Fifth District might not be as strong as other concerns and ambitions. Moreover, setbacks in the refinery dream engendered fear. Supporters were shaken by the announcement in late November of Aristotle Onassis’ plans to build a refinery near Durham, New Hampshire, not far from Lowell “with guaranteed shipments of Mideast oil.” But the New Hampshire refinery proposal quickly ran into trouble. Refinery agents asking to purchase land learned that a refinery would violate local zoning ordinances, which only a town vote could amend. Residents voiced concern about possible damage to surrounding wetlands and wondered about the aesthetics of a refinery four miles from the University of New Hampshire in Durham. According to one resident, “One of the ways the college is able to attract good people to live here and work here is because of its beauty.” In light of the growing opposition in Durham, Dracut’s selectmen unanimously pulled the

¹⁰ Lowell Sun, 9, 10, 23 (“every”) December 1973.

referendum proposal. Selectman Thomas Salem argued that it would fail without more “education” about refinery benefits.¹¹

An astute observer, Tsongas almost certainly saw Cronin’s tendency to exaggerate. Cronin responded to proponents’ fears of environmental opposition by claiming that the EPA had already “approved Lowell as a possible refinery location, placing it three years ahead of proposed refineries . . . in Maine and New Hampshire.” But although he had urged the selectmen not to advocate a referendum, he soon changed his position, asserting that “five giant organizations” were interested in Dracut for a refinery and outlining specific production figures for various distillates expected of the complex. “No oil company will even breathe in this direction,” he said, “unless and until that consensus is forthcoming.” Dracut selectmen announced a town meeting for January 5 to approve a referendum for the March elections.¹²

Refinery proponents became secretive in their quest to avoid environmental opposition. In December, Dracut’s economic development director, Thomas Markham, and Lowell City Councilor Robert Kennedy met with Aristotle Onassis in New Hampshire. Kennedy said that his company, Lowell Gas, wanted to construct a \$200 million synthetic natural gas plant in Lowell and purchase all of the naphtha, one intermediate chemical product of oil refining, that the new refinery could produce. While in Durham, the Lowell/Dracut contingent encountered vocal and growing opposition to the refinery proposal. As many as 700 area conservationists met the same day for a “Save Our Shores”

¹¹ Lowell Sun, 2, 10 October 1973; 14, 27 (“with,” “guaranteed”), 28 (“one,” “education”) November 1973; 9 December 1973.

¹² “Congressman Cronin Reports on Energy,” January 1974, Box 120 A, TC; Lowell Sun, 10 (qtns.), 12 December 1973.

meeting. The Lowell Sun quickly mounted an education campaign in response to fears about environmental opposition, and Lowell placed a refinery referendum on the ballot for Christmas Eve. Kennedy urged the city councilors to support the refinery proposal, but he opposed the referendum, fearing public opposition. “I don’t feel that every time a hot issue arises that government should say let’s have a referendum and let the people decide,” he declared.¹³

Tsongas no doubt saw that local environmentalist opponents of the refinery took issue with Cronin’s misrepresentations of the EPA study. Richard Williams (a consultant for Arthur D. Little and one of Cronin’s opponents in 1972) worried about environmental impacts and, himself a victim of Cronin’s misrepresentations, asked the EPA to clarify its report. Paul Keogh, the EPA’s public affairs director, noted that the study only examined refinery proposals in the abstract. He also expressed dismay that many Lowell-Dracut residents seemed convinced that the EPA had formally approved of a refinery proposal that did not yet exist. Despite their fears, many proponents chose to believe Cronin’s interpretation of the study. But they remained watchful. State Representative Nickolas Lambros pointed out that the two-thirds majority requirement for zoning alterations had killed a far less controversial project—a proposed airport—by a nine-to-one margin, and that only 500 families would have to oppose the refinery to squelch the deal. Councilors in Lowell desperately tried to keep the issue from coming to a referendum, asserting the need for “expediency.”¹⁴

¹³ Lowell Sun, 17, 19-20, 21 (qtn.) December 1973.

¹⁴ Lowell Sun, 6, 26-27, 28 (“expediency”) December 1973.

Most in Greater Lowell seemed to care more about jobs than possible negative environmental effects. At the height of excitement over the referendum, even Patrick Mogan—Lowell’s Superintendent of Schools and champion of an alternative vision for the city’s economic and cultural renaissance, the Urban Cultural Park concept—endorsed the refinery. Speaking at St. Joseph’s Hall in February 1974, Mogan argued that the community should support the refinery because the city could use the negotiations to obtain funds directly from an oil company to support his urban cultural park idea. His examination of other refinery construction projects had revealed that oil companies often built hospitals, schools, or other amenities as part of their development agreements with various municipalities. In front of a crowd of more than one hundred, who had braved whirling snow-flurries, he asserted that the refinery might mean that the urban park concept could move forward without federal funds.¹⁵

In January, Cronin addressed four hundred Dracut voters in the first of two meetings to discuss the referendum. Speaking over slides showing deer, ducks, trees, and flowers surrounding various refineries that he had visited, he stressed refineries’ environmental sensitivity, their many safeguards against spills and other mishaps, and their inevitable construction (perhaps fifty new refineries in the U.S. and seven in New England alone in the next twelve years) to meet future demands for energy. The more than two hundred residents attending the second discussion voted nine-to-one for a referendum in March’s local elections. But locals were curious about the identity of the oil companies interested in the area. Local farmer Theodore Ogonowski, who owned land supporting an Exxon pipeline, suggested that Exxon would let property taxes increase with assessed values

¹⁵ Patrick Mogan, “Oil Refinery,” 26 November 1973, Human Services Corporation Files, University of Massachusetts Lowell, Center for Lowell History (HSC, hereafter); Lowell Sun, 4 February 1974.

in order to purchase land at bankruptcy prices. He then challenged Cronin to tell the crowd if Exxon were one of the interested companies. When Cronin demurred, Ogonowski asked him to name any interested firm, persisting until being called out of order for using too much time. Everyone wanted to remain hopeful, but Ogonowski had raised an issue that would give Cronin more trouble in the coming months.¹⁶

In January 1974, while Greater Lowell dreamed of refineries, Paul Tsongas launched his bid for Cronin's congressional seat. Drawing upon the 1972 election's lesson about party unity, he called a meeting with John Kerry, Paul Sheehy, and several other reform-minded Democrats. He made it clear that Democrats could not afford to make the same mistakes again, or they would miss their chance to replace Cronin. "Everybody can't run again," Tsongas emphasized. He then threw his hat in the ring. "I'm running," he claimed. "Who else is running?" Cronin looked particularly strong at the time, and nobody stepped forward. He then asked Kerry and Sheehy to work with him on a letter protesting Cronin's abuse of the franking privilege. Cronin maintained that private funds had paid for the estimated 120,000 postcards he had sent to advertise the three town meetings earlier that month. But the three Democrats called the postcards deceptive, noting that 80 percent of the cost of the mailing was postage, costing an estimated \$16,800 in public money. To reporters asking about the letter, Tsongas called the postcards "clearly political" and added that he would be seeking the Democratic nomination that year.¹⁷

At first, Tsongas's efforts were overshadowed in the hyperbole of 1974's refinery mania. Dracut's economic development director, Thomas F. Markham, who had begun to

¹⁶ Lowell Sun, 3-6 January 1974.

¹⁷ Fred Faust interview, 17 October 2003 ("Everybody," "I'm," "Who"); Andover Journal, 17 January 1974 ("clearly").

tape-record meetings of Durham's Save Our Shores committee, once asked the City Development Committee if they knew "that for every 1,000 gallons of oil there are 39,000 jobs" and claimed that the unemployment rate in Lowell would be down to 3 percent in no time. In late January, the newly-elected Lowell City Council deferred voting on the refinery proposal, saying that it needed more time to study the issue. One councilor, Richard P. Howe, suggested that the city, state, and federal governments should be examining alternative sources of energy, rather than focusing on a refinery that might become obsolete in a decade. But Congressman Cronin flew back from Washington to address the council, urging them to vote in favor of the refinery, saying that if they were unanimous in their support, they would "probably see some proposals very soon." One councilor predicted that the council and the city had just made their first steps towards an "economic renaissance." Markham claimed that three refinery companies would "be here on the sixth day of March," referring to the day after the Dracut referendum.¹⁸

Tsongas watched with interest as refinery opponents searched for evidence of more of Cronin's duplicity. In late December, an informal group, "Second Look," had begun to meet in the home of Dracut resident Michael Mondazzi to discuss the refinery. Just before the Dracut referendum, Mondazzi released an eight-page study delineating estimates of tax effects of a refinery. It claimed that refineries built recently had produced no significant tax benefits for towns in which they were located, and that industrial development in general tended to have little effect upon tax rates. He also produced an affidavit from the assessor

¹⁸ Lowell Sun, 9, 10, 16, 25 ("that"), 26 ("probably"), 30 ("economic," "be") January 1974.

of Whatcom County in Washington, where a Mobil refinery had recently been built, that claimed “its construction did not have the overall effect of lowering taxes in that area.”¹⁹

By the time of March’s referendum, Cronin had begun to distance himself from the refinery, avoiding the issue even while speaking to the Chamber of Commerce about the energy crisis. But Dracut passed the referendum by a wide margin, and local development officials met with representatives from Olympic Refineries to ask for support and advice. The idea gained unexpected urgency later that month when Lowell City Manager James Sullivan called a meeting between Dracut Selectmen and Lowell City Councilors. They met behind closed doors with John S. Bottomly, of the New York law firm Schwartz, Burns, Lesser and Jacoby, which represented the Venezuelan government. Bottomly had sent Sullivan a letter indicating that the Dracut referendum clinched the Venezuelan government’s interest, and that they would be able to guarantee a source of crude to the refinery, in addition to financing its construction. Even more ideal for boosters, the Venezuelans did not use supertankers, so there would be no need for a deepwater port. Bottomly claimed that Venezuela’s new president, Carlos Andres Perez, knew of major oil companies also interested in building a refinery in Lowell-Dracut. Leaders of Lowell and Dracut quickly sent a letter with Bottomly to Caracas declaring their interest. Cronin realized that the issue had gotten away from him. He wanted to claim credit for any refinery in the area. Now scrambling, he claimed that eleven companies were interested in a Lowell-Dracut refinery, but that it would take six to nine months for them to come up with concrete proposals. A delay of six months might ensure Cronin’s reelection, if people saw him as the vital link between oil companies, state government, and a refinery. For good

¹⁹ Lowell Sun, 27 February 1974.

measure, Cronin claimed that Massport executive Edward King was referring interested oil companies directly to him.²⁰

By late March many in Greater Lowell pictured a bidding war between various oil companies for the right to build a Lowell-Dracut refinery. Jay Schaffran, another attorney representing the Venezuelan Consulate, claimed that the Olympic Refinery project in Durham showed that some companies were trying to bring Middle Eastern Oil into New England (which received most of its supplies from Latin America and the United States). Thomas Markham maintained that he had shown land in Dracut to two major oil companies in the middle of March. A spokesman for the Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce giddily exulted that “competition between refinery proponents . . . would allow the local area to . . . hand pick its refinery.”²¹

Tsongas watched as Cronin’s refinery idea began to go awry. After the referendum and the expression of interest from Venezuela, Costello began to suspect Cronin of dragging his feet for some reason on the refinery issue, and the editor began to push for more information and more action. He publicized Cronin’s disputes with local officials, noting that Cronin had “ridiculed” attempts to bring the Olympic refinery to Lowell. Costello called for the creation of a Lowell-Dracut Refinery Commission to direct local efforts, and he blasted Cronin’s perceived lack of appreciation for local efforts to bring in a refinery. Cronin stood his ground on the Venezuelan matter, issuing a press release urging local officials not to pursue it and calling it “as phony as a three-dollar bill.” Costello asked the “self-appointed refinery czar” to “come down from his lofty perch and start cooperating

²⁰ Lowell Sun, 1, 17, 21 March 1974.

²¹ Lowell Sun, 25 March 1974.

with ‘the locals’ as he describes us instead of trying to dictate to us and run this refinery show as if it were his own personal property.’²²

From March onward, Cronin attempted to retain his hold on the refinery issue, possibly to maintain the appearance that he had an inside track to oil companies. He told Sun staffers that Venezuelan oil was totally committed under long-term contracts for several years. Bottomly assured Sun staff that the Venezuelan government had control, ultimately, of oil resources. Cronin met with several Dracut selectmen and urged them to clear future refinery meetings, promotional efforts, or proposals through him. They agreed, but in early April, Markham announced that he was discussing sites in Dracut and Methuen with three major oil companies, and that they were interested in 3,500 acres.²³

By mid-April, local scientists had begun to study the environmental effects of refineries more closely. On April 18, the Merrimack Valley Chapter of the Institute for Environmental Scientists addressed the refinery issue from an environmental standpoint. Richard R. Keppler, a petroleum management specialist for the Environmental Protection Agency’s Region I office, discussed a new EPA report listing likely locations for a refinery in New England. According to Keppler, the Merrimack Valley had been excluded because a mid-sized refinery would exceed hydrocarbon standards by “a factor of 30.” But pending an actual refinery proposal, there seemed little reason to spend more time considering the issue. Nobody was happy about waiting until January 1975 for Cronin’s mythical refinery proposals, but there seemed little anyone could do.²⁴

²² Lowell Sun, 28 March 1974.

²³ Lowell Sun, 28, 29 March; 4 April 1974.

²⁴ Lowell Sun, 19 April 1974.

It was against this backdrop that Tsongas, on May 23, 1974, officially announced his candidacy to represent Massachusetts' Fifth Congressional District and began more systematic attacks on Cronin. He chose to begin with the Watergate scandal, partially because of Cronin's vulnerability on that issue, partially because it would help engender party unity. "Today, our democratic heritage—preserved after two centuries of sacrifice—has been soiled by the immorality symbolized by Watergate," he argued, "We are led by an administration dedicated not to our democratic legacy but rather to political expediency." Then he personalized his message for Cronin: "[H]ere, where America began, we are represented by a Congressman who has given Richard Nixon what he desires most of all—silence." Cronin had been tied to Watergate already. In 1973, he had dismissed his chief aide, Steve Karalekas, because of his ties to the Nixon administration when The Washington Post connected Karalekas to White House staffer Charles Colson. Karalekas had sent an "administrative confidential" memo to Colson regarding activities of a Secret Service agent assigned to guard George McGovern in the 1972 presidential campaign.²⁵

Tsongas's brief statement hit upon many other campaign issues: inflation, health care costs, rising gas prices, and the "unfair tax structure," tying them all together with the theme of representation. He pledged to run an open campaign that would leave him obligated only to the people of the district. "Unlike my opponent, I do not believe that what's right with America is to be found in the board rooms of ITT and Gulf Oil, but rather in the homes of American people." He vowed to "walk the length and breadth of this district" as he did in his 1972 campaign for Middlesex County Commissioner. Later that night, at a buffet dinner in Lawrence, Tsongas recalled Vice President Spiro Agnew's appearance at a \$100-a-plate

²⁵ Paul Tsongas News Release, 19 September 1974, Box 120A, TC.

dinner the previous year, which helped Cronin to liquidate his 1972 campaign debts.

Tsongas challenged Cronin to take a stand on Nixon's impeachment and told reporters that he intended to make the most of Cronin's Nixon connections and would probably build his entire campaign around that theme. When asked about his position on the oil refinery, Tsongas criticized Cronin's handling of the issue and pointed to the huge potential for such a project, but he also noted the potential for such a project to become a giveaway program for oil companies "already awash in profits."²⁶

Tsongas disliked fundraising, but knew he needed to raise considerable resources to defeat an incumbent. Volunteers used John Kerry's lists from the 1972 campaign to pinpoint donors, but lacking Kerry's national fame, they could only realistically call the local numbers. Tsongas needed a campaign manager. Doris Kanin, a friend, told him that her son might be interested. After meeting Dennis Kanin, who had run unsuccessfully for Congress, Tsongas asked him to manage the campaign. Doris Kanin also told Richard Arenberg, a political science professor at Boston University with experience in public opinion research, about the campaign. Tsongas visited Arenberg's office after a Red Sox game, wearing jeans and tattered running shoes, his shirt-tails hanging out. Unimpressed, but intrigued, Arenberg came to Lowell in June to meet the rest of the team at a Friendly's restaurant on Central Street downtown. Arenberg and Fred Faust, a local radio announcer Tsongas had asked to head the press effort, were joined by Kanin and Tsongas. None of them were impressed with any of the others. None believed that Tsongas would win the race either. But they rented an old tailor's shop on Andover Street, complete with a mangle,

²⁶ Lowell Sun, 19 September 1973; 19 April; 23 May 1974; Lawrence Eagle-Tribune, 24 ("already") May 1974; Paul Tsongas Statement of Candidacy, 23 May 1974 ("unfair," "Unlike," "walk,"), Box 120A, TC; transcript of Mehmed Ali interview with Nicola Tsongas, 11 February 2003, CLH.

from which Faust periodically joked he would issue a press release. Above the shop lived a group of very visible, loud, Hells Angels, who more than once interrupted phone fundraising solicitations by starting their motorcycles in back of the shop. John Kerry offered Tsongas's staff some "ratty furniture" on loan. The office's one typewriter lacked a take-up reel for its cloth ribbon, which spilled out onto the floor while in operation. Kanin drew a large chart on a poster board behind a desk to chart fundraising efforts.²⁷

Kanin and Arenberg attempted to interest the National Committee for an Effective Congress (NCEC) in the Fifth District campaign. Tsongas did not need political polling resources, which NCEC usually provided, but sought the organization's advice. When NCEC sent Mark Shields to meet with the campaign team in the Lowell headquarters, the team tried desperately to impress him. Kanin hid the fundraising chart—its blue bars, representing funds already raised, never approached the goal line, and were sometimes barely visible. Shields asked Tsongas, oldest member of the team by five years, "Are there any adults in this campaign?" When Shields finally asked how the fundraising was going, Tsongas turned on Kerry's swivel chair and gestured to where the chart usually hung. The chair fell over, leaving Tsongas on the floor, pointing to an empty space on the wall. His staff promptly joined him, doubling over in laughter. Shields did not seem impressed.²⁸

Through the summer Tsongas's fundraising yielded more money, but the goal line on Kanin's chart remained elusive, even by mid-July, when the lead fundraiser for the campaign announced that he would be vacationing during August. Tsongas turned to Patrick D'Addario, who had been recommended for a summer internship towards a political

²⁷ Richard Arenberg interview 24 October 2003; Transcript of Fred Faust interview with Mehmed Ali, 13 February 2003; transcript of interview with Mehmed Ali and Nicola Tsongas, 11 February 2003, UMLCLH.

²⁸ Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003.

science degree, to head the effort. D’Addario, flattered, looked into fundraising, calling some friends to ask how to go about it, but told Tsongas that he did not really know how to raise money. Tsongas replied that nobody else wanted to do it and again offered him the job. By mid-summer, members of the campaign team had changed opinions about Tsongas, and the chances of his winning. Richard Arenberg had been in line for a job with Senator Muskie’s office, but called to report that he would be coming to Washington with the new congressman of Massachusetts’s Fifth District. D’Addario began to phone people to explain what a wonderful candidate Tsongas was. He also began to call companies in the southern part of the district for support. D’Addario’s fundraising, though disorganized, became increasingly effective. Periodically, staff members in search of money for flyers or postage rifled through D’Addario’s desk, finding enough in donation checks and pledges to continue daily operations.²⁹

Tsongas’s Republican opponent, increasingly damaged by the unfolding saga of Watergate, regained interest in the refinery. In late May he claimed that ten firms were buying up land options in Dracut. The rumors began to fly. Thomas Salem, the chair of Dracut’s Industrial Commission, claimed that he had “been told by a number of people the 300 acres needed have been optioned already.” Dracut Selectman Daigle noted at one point that “there might be a combine in town right now.” They contacted Cronin’s office in Washington and he flew directly to meet with them. Salem asked the names of companies involved. Cronin, with a series of feeble excuses, refused to identify them, finally telling the crowd that, although he would reap political dividends if proposals were ready before the November election, hastily drafted proposals that failed could just as easily hurt him. In late

²⁹ Interviews: Patrick D’Addario, 24 September 2003; Fred Faust, 17 October 2003; Transcript of Richard Arenberg interview with Mehmed Ali, 23 May 2003, CLH.

May Cronin issued a press release stating that he had been flying unnamed federal officials over the area in his own plane to demonstrate to them the many advantages of the Lowell-Dracut site, explaining that “the natural contour of the land lends itself to the location of the refinery in an aesthetically attractive manner.” He pledged to continue the flights through the summer months and insisted that the town would see a refinery proposal by January of 1975.³⁰

Some constituents did not want to wait until January. Clement Costello called for the creation of several commissions to begin examining how best to counter environmental opposition to the project and how to publicize it appropriately, and he called for joint committees to hire people to spearhead the efforts toward lobbying for a deep-water port. In June he asked others to join him in his efforts to force Cronin to disclose some company names. Gerald Lannan of Raytheon supported Costello, urging weekly meetings with business leaders to discuss the refinery issue. Arthur Kelts of the Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce also believed in more openness, saying that “as much information as possible should be divulged.” Others posed as insiders who, like Cronin, understood the mysterious ways of big business. City Councilor Robert Kennedy noted, “From my experience in the industrial field, I can fully appreciate the need for confidentiality in dealing with major firms.” Although EPA spokesman Keogh noted that he had not seen any proposals from oil companies, he thought Cronin was doing a “good job of working behind the scenes.” He added that it was better to “meet with all interested groups and find out the various objections prior to looking for headlines” and that Cronin was attempting to put together a strategy that “touches all bases before making an announcement.” Out of fear, others

³⁰ Lowell Sun, 23 (“been,” “there”), 25 (“the natural”) May 1974; 18 June 1974.

tagged along with Cronin. Dracut selectman Roger Daigle expressed the feelings of many, calling Cronin “the only real source we have.” Local reporters became increasingly skeptical, like the Lowell Sun’s Alberta Cook, who called the refinery “more than just a rumor for sure, but still, as far as public knowledge is concerned, a vision dancing in the heads of a small, but powerful, group of people.”³¹

The refinery issue and the Watergate scandal comprised only two arrows in a growing quiver of questions Tsongas could aim at Cronin’s duplicity. In a local television interview Cronin painted an optimistic picture of the previous year and one-half: “When I took office, the unemployment rate in Lowell was better than 12 percent. Today, it’s about 7.2.” Searching for a way to appeal to the southern part of the district, he pointed to his role in bringing federal contracts, asserting that he had doubled his goal of bringing \$1 million per day of federal money into the Fifth District. This new tack distracted people from the refinery issue, but it also flew in the face of reality, particularly his assertions about federal contracts. One reporter, Greg Jarboe, later noted that Cronin’s claims amounted to “\$3,000 in government grants and contracts for each and every man, woman and child living in the 5th District,” and called his arguments “patently absurd.”³²

By July, as Cronin negotiated rough political waters, Tsongas faced only one weak opponent in the Democratic primary, former state senator William Madden of Lexington, who lacked the organizational support and the money to beat Tsongas. Madden’s entire staff consisted of himself and his eighteen-year-old son. Their effort was funded primarily with \$5,000 of Madden’s own money. Madden campaigned on the assertion that other

³¹ Lowell Sun, 24 May; 2, 3 (“as,” “from,” “good,” “meet,” “the”), 4 (“more”) June 1974.

³² Today, 17 July 1974.

candidates were beholden to corporations or moneyed interests. Such an effort failed to differentiate him from the much larger effort of Tsongas, who began increasingly to seize upon financial disclosure as a campaign issue. In July, Tsongas released his previous three years tax returns. He clothed the openness in terms of Watergate and the importance of “restoring public confidence in our governmental institutions and our elected officials.” Tsongas knew that in the summer of 1973 Cronin had been forced to disclaim publicly his interest in some of his business holdings after Boston Globe reporters disclosed that he had signed federal contracts with his own businesses. Cronin had already disclosed his net worth in the Congressional Record to satisfy investigators and boasted that he had beaten Tsongas to the punch. But Tsongas countered that “net worth statements without supporting documents can be misleading or conveniently limited,” which Cronin denied. In response to repeated challenges to release his income tax returns, Cronin asserted that he had given away his business assets to partners and placed the rest in a trust for his children’s education, including the titles to two houses in Andover, Massachusetts, one of which he rented from the trust as his home.³³

In early August, on the heels of Nixon’s release of transcripts of three damaging June 23, 1972 conversations, Cronin finally told reporters that he would vote for Impeachment Article I charging the president with obstruction of justice. Tsongas had been publicly calling for Nixon’s impeachment after Nixon fired Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox in October 1973. When Cronin began to consider impeachment under Article I, Tsongas took a stronger stance. “I believe in light of yesterday’s revelations that the nation would be best served by the President’s immediate resignation,” he declared. He was not alone. Even

³³ Lowell Sun 7, 18 July 1974; Lawrence Eagle-Tribune, 18 July 1974 (qtns.).

some of the president's best supporters were changing their minds. But Cronin decided only to support Article I at that time and spend more time poring through the transcripts before he made a decision about whether to support the other articles. When Nixon resigned in August, Tsongas worried that Cronin's campaign might be able to change direction. "Why couldn't Nixon have waited?" he asked wistfully. Although earlier projections speculated that as many as forty congressional seats would change hands in the election, the estimated number after Nixon's resignation fell to half that.³⁴

Gerald Ford pardoned Nixon on the Sunday before the primary election, amplifying the "conspiracy issue" surrounding Watergate. Tsongas continued to try to gain Democratic support. Local Democratic heavyweight George O'Meara sponsored a flyer backing Tsongas, which reporters interpreted as an indication that Tsongas was now getting assistance from mainstream local Democrats. Tsongas also had the support of U.S. Representative Michael J. Harrington, despite an informal "club rule" among House members that they do not get involved in each other's races.³⁵

Tsongas ultimately won a devastating 71 percent of the primary vote, doing very well in cities not part of Middlesex County in which he had campaigned for the first time—Lawrence, Methuen, and Andover, Cronin's home town. Madden conceded the election at midnight on September 10, and asked to talk to Tsongas before the November election, indicating that he would probably support him. Instead, a few days later, concerned about appearing consistent with his campaign themes, Madden charged that Tsongas had spent too

³⁴ Patrick D'Addario interview, 24 September 2003 ("Why"); Lowell Sun, 6 August 1974 ("P").

³⁵ The Lowell Sun, 5, 11 September 1974; The Boston Globe, Lawrence Eagle-Tribune, 11 September 1974; John Robert Greene, The Presidency of Gerald R. Ford (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1995), 60-61.

much money on the campaign and was beholden to large donors. In early September the Tsongas campaign had already spent five times as much as Madden, equaling Cronin's \$25,000, but nowhere near its \$100,000 goal. Although the state required candidates to report only contributions over \$25, Tsongas reported all of them, contrasting his broad base of support with Cronin's top-heavy list of donations.³⁶

Newspapers called Tsongas the underdog. For one thing, Cronin had managed to avoid upsetting labor during his term, and the Fifth District was not an area of concern for the AFL-CIO, which did not include it on its list of "target Districts." When the AFL-CIO executive committee voted 19 to 15 in favor of Tsongas, short of the two-thirds majority required to endorse him, Tsongas claimed to be "very grateful to those people willing to go against the pressure applied by Washington and state COPE" (the state labor group's Committee of Political Education), both of which endorsed only incumbents as a matter of policy. Some local labor groups, like the Greater Lowell Central Labor Council, the United Auto Workers, and the Ladies Garment Workers Union, supported Tsongas. More unions, like the Greater Lawrence-Haverhill Central Labor Council, Local number 187 of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, the Massachusetts Building Trades Council, the National Educators Association, the United Brotherhood of Carpenters, and the United Transportation Union, supported Cronin.³⁷

After his primary win, Tsongas's work to bring important Democrats behind his candidacy began to pay off. Democratic gubernatorial nominee Michael Dukakis and his running mate, Paul Guzzi, spoke in favor of Tsongas at an international dinner at the Marist

³⁶ The Boston Globe, 11 September 1974; The Lowell Sun, 5, 11 September 1974; Lawrence Eagle-Tribune, 11 September 1974.

³⁷ Today, 21 August 1974; Lawrence Eagle-Tribune, 10 September; Lowell Sun, 8 ("very") 9 October 1974.

Field House in Bedford. Tsongas thanked them and voiced his support for the Democratic nominee for State Representative from Bedford Carol Amick. He also urged party unity. Tsongas contacted House Majority leader Thomas P. O'Neill, whose son was running for lieutenant governor, and they talked about presenting a united front.³⁸

At a September 13 press conference in his headquarters, Tsongas chipped away at Cronin's credibility. Beginning with statements regarding Cronin's reluctance to state his position on Watergate, he quickly moved to the theme of a crisis of confidence in the government, which he believed Ford had worsened by pardoning Nixon. "How many other crimes by high Republican officials will be swept under the rug?" he asked. "With men like Paul Cronin in office, we will never know." Tsongas sent a telegram to Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski asking him to "vigorously pursue this investigation until all the facts are disclosed," and urging him to indict Nixon for "alleged illegal activities committed during his tenure as President of the United States." Tsongas said that the object of such an investigation would not be to punish the president, since the pardon might make him immune, but to "ascertain the truth." Tsongas also brought the Urban Cultural Park issue forward for the first time in the campaign, as an economic development issue. He charged that Cronin's stewardship of that project had given the Fifth District "a lot of fluff and no money." Prior concerns about whether the low-key Tsongas could "aim for the jugular" in the way that unseating an incumbent would require began to evaporate.³⁹

Cronin officially inaugurated his campaign at a breakfast sponsored by the Democrats for Cronin Committee. In what Tsongas campaign staff later remembered as a grave tactical

³⁸ Tsongas Press Release, 14 September 1974, Box 120A, TC; Lowell Sun, 15 September 1974.

³⁹ Tsongas Press Release, 13 September 1974, Box 120A, TC ("How," "With," "vigorously," "alleged," "ascertain," "a"); Lawrence Eagle-Tribune, 13 September 1974; Lowell Sun, 13 September 1974 ("aim").

error, Cronin began to defend himself against Tsongas's questions and statements. He issued a statement calling the presidential pardon of Nixon "premature," since he had not yet been indicted, and voiced his support for President Ford's wish to get Watergate over with in order to pull the nation together. Cronin claimed that he had called for the release of the tapes immediately after Alexander Butterfield brought their existence to the attention of the public in July, and that "on 50 separate occasions over the past 16 months" he had "spoken out on the issue." He responded at length to Tsongas's claims about a variety of other issues, including his support for military aid to Cambodia, his questionable labor voting record, and his votes against rent and price controls. Attempting to strike positive notes, he claimed once again that employment in Lowell and Lawrence had increased by 7,000 in the previous eighteen months.⁴⁰

Delighted with finally putting Cronin in a defensive posture, Tsongas unleashed a veritable paper storm the next day, a detailed seven-page press release with more than a dozen appendices, that he spread all over the Merrimack Valley. It read like a legal brief, and comprehensively supported all the charges that Cronin had tried to refute the day before. Tsongas listed sources for his information on oil company contributions to Cronin's 1972 campaign. He tied the contributor (Richard Mellon Scaife, whose family had a controlling interest in Gulf Oil) to the Nixon administration. Then he demonstrated that Cronin had equivocated about whether he received contributions from "major" oil companies. He supplied documents showing Cronin's vote to cut Health Education and Welfare funding, calling the vote an "important test of Executive versus Legislative authority." He very effectively countered Cronin's dissembling about the unemployment rate. While noting the

⁴⁰ Lawrence Eagle-Tribune, 12 September 1974 ("on," "spoken"); Hansconian, 12 September 1974 ("premature").

difficulty of measuring the unemployment rate consistently, due to Division of Employment Security's changed methods of computation, he pointed out that since the number of employed people increased, there must be even more unemployed people, because the unemployment rate in fact went up. He pleaded, "There are more people out of work today than there were two years ago. How much more simply can that fact be stated?" In perhaps the most detailed example, Tsongas documented Cronin's misrepresentations about the Lowell Monorail, attaching a copy of Cronin's press release, letters from the Northern Middlesex Area Commission, and Lowell Sun articles quoting Cronin's positions. Tsongas then provided support for his previous statements about Cronin's positions on Watergate. He provided photocopies of newspaper articles containing Cronin's statements asserting that the Senate investigation was a "three ring circus" and a "waste of money." Weighing in at nearly a pound, the stack of damning paper pointed to Cronin's long and distinguished habit of deception.⁴¹

Tsongas called once again for a public debate, noting that Cronin had not responded to his two previous requests, copies of which he also attached. He then hit upon Cronin's reluctance to release his tax returns. Cronin had argued that the information was available in the Congressional Record, from which an accountant could get all the "relevant financial information." But Tsongas countered that "Paul Cronin's past questionable activities and deceptions will do little to convince people that if they want to know about their Congressman's finances they can hire an accountant to figure them out." Poking fun at

⁴¹ Letter from Charles H. Graves, Director, Division of Planning Assistance, Office of Transit Planning, Department of Transportation to Joseph P Hannon, Executive Director of the Northern Middlesex Area Commission, 5 June 1974, Box 120A, TC; Letter from J. W. Marshall, Office of Public Affairs, Department of Transportation to Joseph P. Hannon, 11 September 1974, Box 120A, TC; Tsongas Press Release, 23 August 1974, Box 120A, TC; Tsongas Press Release, 17 September 1974, Box 120A, TC ("important," "there," "three," "waste"); Lowell Sun, 23 August 1974.

Cronin's billboard campaign slogan, Tsongas said, "I don't believe that's 'everything our Congressman should be.'" Tsongas had prepared for a dialogue with Cronin for more than a year, and had been ignored. Some local newspapers reprinted Tsongas' rebuttals verbatim, with references, although without the appendices. On the defensive, Cronin agreed conditionally to a debate.⁴²

By late September, the Cronin-Tsongas battle was the most interesting congressional race in Massachusetts, and it hinged increasingly upon credibility. Boston Globe staffer Robert Turner noted the unemployment dispute, siding with Tsongas, and pointed to its relevance to the area's economic difficulties. He also sided with Tsongas regarding the issue of federal contracts in the district, noting that the most Cronin could claim would be an increase of \$200,000 since he took office. Turner agreed with Tsongas about Cronin's alleged role in attracting corporations to the district. In turn, Cronin tried to remain positive, telling people to "[b]eware of the negative thinker. We should always beware of one who can only criticize, since progress in the world is made by men of vision who think positively and build for the future." But Tsongas did not believe that he was being negative so much as inquisitive, a crucial distinction for him, and for the campaign. Richard Arenberg's polls earlier in the summer had indicated that Tsongas and Cronin shared high favorable ratings. As Tsongas continued to question Cronin, and Cronin defended himself, Tsongas began to get positive results. Arenberg's September poll indicated that Tsongas was barely trailing

⁴² Lawrence Eagle-Tribune, 18 July 1974 ("relevant"); Tsongas Press Release, 17 September 1974 Box 120A, TC ("Paul," "I"); Today, 18 September 1974.

Cronin within the poll's margin of error (sample of 400), which contrasted markedly from June, when Tsongas was down by 20 points.⁴³

In late September, Tsongas redoubled his efforts to bring key Democrats into his camp. He earned endorsements from George O'Meara, the state Democratic Committeeman from Lowell, William Geary, chairman of the Democratic City Committee, State Representative Philip L. Shea, Lowell Mayor Armand LeMay, State Committeewoman Molly Sheehy, Senator Edward Kennedy, Congressman Thomas P. O'Neill (who sent him a check for \$500), and former Governor Endicott "Chub" Peabody. Because John Kerry was not particularly popular, Tsongas asked him to remain silent, although Kerry lived in Lowell at the time.⁴⁴

In October, Tsongas turned his attention more and more to the southern part of the district. For cities like Bedford, Concord, Wilmington, and Lexington—more cosmopolitan than Lowell and Lawrence, but hit hard by cutbacks in federal spending on military and aerospace technology—he needed an economic development strategy that did not have anti-environmental connotations. He based his jobs plan, which he called the Jobs Resources Section, on cutting labor market inefficiencies and stimulating public-private cooperation. The plan envisioned the creation of a Job Resources Section as part of his congressional office; an economic development task force comprised of local officials, planners and business leaders; a youth employment office to help direct youths toward growing industries and training for jobs available in these industries; business climate initiatives focused upon

⁴³ Boston Globe, 30 September 1974.

⁴⁴ Lowell Sun, 3 October 1974; Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003; Transcript of Fred Faust interview with Mehmed Ali, 13 February 1974; Transcript of Nicola Tsongas interview with Mehmed Ali, 11 February 2003, CLH.

infrastructure; services to match prospective companies interested in relocating to the district to prospective workers; increased use of the Department of Labor to help match people to jobs; defense reconversion efforts (to “urban technology and mass transportation fields”); and increased involvement of local residents in economic development efforts. He pledged more than half of the \$94,000 allotted for congressional staff to this one comprehensive effort. The Jobs Resources Section effectively attracted support from the southern part of the district, partially because the plan aimed to help existing companies, rather than attracting new companies from outside.

Cronin’s economic development strategy looked outside the district, relying heavily upon a *deus ex machina*, faith in the future, and trust in Cronin. And it relied upon dirty tricks. At Tsongas’s announcement of his economic development plans a man who identified himself as “Lenny,” and claimed to be a staff reporter for the Boston Globe, criticized the Tsongas jobs proposal so stridently that some on the Tsongas team suspected foul play. A call to the Globe confirmed that the paper had not sent a reporter, and had none by that name. Tsongas campaign manager Dennis Kanin recognized “Lenny” later that week sitting at his desk at Cronin campaign headquarters.⁴⁵

Finally, on October 13, less than a month before the election, the candidates debated one another on Boston’s WCVB television. One observer called it a “slugging match,” where the candidates “stood on the same platform, zinging each other. And barely even polite about it. It’s the sort of thing you see on a street corner.” The Mostek issue figured prominently in the debate. Tsongas charged that Cronin had announced that the Texas-based company Mostek would open a 1500-employee plant in Lowell and that Cronin’s

⁴⁵ Lowell Sun, 11, 17 October 1974; Lawrence Eagle Tribune, 11, 17 October 1974.

statement was false. Tsongas had called Mostek in late September, after noticing that there were no cars in the Avco parking lot that was supposed to be Mostek's new home. A company representative told him that they were not hiring. Then Tsongas and others from his campaign team visited the site and were told that the plant was for sale or lease. In response, Cronin produced a letter from a Mostek official suggesting that the company had merely postponed their expansion "because of conditions neither of us can control—the health of the electronics industry." Tsongas felt vindicated and his campaign flyers later began to feature pictures of the empty Avco building.⁴⁶

Cronin also read from a letter that he claimed substantiated his landing another company, MacBick, for Billerica, Massachusetts. Tsongas countered that Macbick had planned to move to Billerica long before Cronin took office. Later, a reporter noted that the letter Cronin read in support of his claim had been written by a campaign contributor of \$2000, also noting that it gave no specific evidence of Cronin's part in that move and that it did not mention MacBick. Indeed, the portion of the letter that Cronin cited in the debate stated only that "I share your belief that creating jobs is an admirable, necessary form of social responsibility." Tsongas then answered a question about voter apathy by bringing up Watergate and his interest in full financial disclosure in campaigns. He once again urged Cronin to do the same. Cronin replied that Tsongas should release a list of his legal clients. The two managed to cover, shallowly, a great deal of ground during the thirty minutes, discussing employment issues, industrial policy, financial resources, the proposed Ford Tax surcharge, and health insurance, but the issue for many became Cronin's credibility. One reporter noted that "Tsongas left one wondering whether anyone would want to buy a used

⁴⁶ Lowell Sun, 29 October 1974.

car from a man like Cronin. Cronin left one in doubt, because his responses weren't to the mark." Noting the "attractive appearance" of both candidates, he contrasted Tsongas's "deceptively sleepy look" with Cronin, who looked "peevish," and "seemed . . . slightly annoyed that he had to go through the routine of appealing to the electorate for votes." It reminded another reporter of the 1960 Kennedy-Nixon debate.⁴⁷

Cronin claimed that his polls showed him ahead in the race, but his duplicity had begun to catch up with him. Tsongas volunteers caught children taking Tsongas leaflets from doorways and replacing them with Cronin leaflets. When they followed the children to Cronin headquarters and questioned them, the children claimed that "Lenny" had asked them to do it. In an attempt to put Tsongas on the defensive, Cronin had asked him to sign the Fair Campaign Practices Code as a condition to the debate. In response, Tsongas campaign manager Dennis Kanin formally requested that the Fair Campaign Practices Committee investigate Cronin's campaign tactics. Kanin also called Cronin's campaign headquarters to discuss the theft of Tsongas leaflets with Cronin campaign manager Peter Ottmar, who admitted that "Tsongas leaflets were taken to Cronin headquarters and later thrown out." When reporters questioned Cronin, he claimed not to know anything about the incidents, and called the allegations "ridiculous" and "rather hard to believe." He agreed to look into the actions of his staff, but may not have known what they were doing. After Karakelas had left the staff to distance Cronin from the Nixon Administration, Cronin

⁴⁷ Today, 16 October 1974.

decided to manage his own campaign, frequently offending the very people who were working towards reelecting him.⁴⁸

Cronin had long avoided and obfuscated the disclosure issue by maintaining that he had placed his business assets into what he described as an “irrevocable trust,” which provided for his children’s education. Research by the Tsongas team and some newspapers unearthed more questions than answers. Cronin had delayed putting his assets into the trust for more than eight months after taking office. And when he finally created the Dundee Trust for the assets, he named his campaign treasurer, Peter Brennan, as trustee through another trust that Brennan shared with Cronin’s brother, Lawrence. Nor was the trust irrevocable. Cronin had the power to “alter or amend, in whole or in part, the terms and provisions” of the trust by simply writing a letter to the trustees—his campaign treasurer. And after leaving office, he was free to revoke all of its provisions. Another provision of the trust allowed his wife to draw payments of principal at will, up to the entire amount. What the issue of the trusts highlighted most was not shady business dealings, but that Cronin was hiding something with an elaborate shell game, which fit well with the Watergate themes that the Tsongas campaign team returned to time and again.⁴⁹

Cronin even dissembled about the status of the race, claiming that his own polling showed him ahead of Tsongas. The Boston Globe’s much more comprehensive polling claimed that the Tsongas-Cronin contest was the only race in the state that was close—nearly even. But Cronin countered that the Globe poll performed just before the 1972

⁴⁸ Boston Globe, 14 October 1974; Lowell Sun, 17 October 1974 (“Tsongas”); Lawrence Eagle-Tribune, 17 October 1974 (“ridiculous,” “rather”). The FCPC investigates both sides but does not render a judgment. If both sides wish a judgment, the FCPC assists by setting up arbitration hearings with the American Arbitration Association.

⁴⁹ Boston Globe, 6 August 1973; Today, 16 October 1974 (qtns.).

election had put Kerry ahead of him at two to one and that it had also shown that McGovern was losing in the district. “But Nixon ended up losing in the district by 20,000 votes,” Cronin claimed, “and I ended up winning by 18,000.” At the end of October, the Tsongas team managed to bring “Tip” O’Neill, Jr. to Lawrence and Methuen to stump for Democratic unity and for Tsongas. O’Neill predicted a “tidal wave of support” for Democrats. While in Massachusetts, he also campaigned for his son, who was running for lieutenant governor.⁵⁰

Both candidates greeted the final two weeks of the campaign with a great deal of anxiety. Tsongas felt that Cronin was waiting to the last minute to reveal a winning hand. Cronin had pressured the Raytheon Corporation’s Badger subsidiary into conducting an oil refinery study, which concluded, two weeks before the election, that a refinery was not feasible for the area. Badger had also built a scale model of the refinery. Cronin hid the study’s findings from voters and denied any knowledge of it. Tsongas learned of the scale model from a friend, and feared that it suggested a positive conclusion to the feasibility study, but his friend did not know the study’s conclusion. Tsongas feared that Cronin would unveil the model in a last-ditch campaign effort, undermining his efforts in the old industrial towns in the northern part of the district. Cronin, as usual, feared the discovery of the truth.⁵¹

In the second debate on WEEI radio on Monday, October 21, Cronin came off smoother than Tsongas. Tsongas did well on the campaign issues, but Cronin managed to put him on the defensive. Cronin claimed that Tsongas had raised taxes for counties, which

⁵⁰ Lawrence Eagle-Tribune, 17 October 1974 (“But,” “and”); Lowell Sun, 18, 29 (“tidal”) October 1974.

⁵¹ Lowell Sun, 31 July 1975.

Tsongas called a “deliberate deception.” The two then sparred over a constitutional amendment Cronin supported that would allow Congress to overturn Supreme Court decisions with a three-quarter majority. Tsongas warned that, without the separation of powers, the Nixon tapes might not have been released. Cronin responded that the constitutional amendment issue was a “red herring” and that such an amendment if allowed, would eliminate the “pain and suffering caused the public” by decisions such as “those on busing, abortion and prayer.”⁵²

Increasingly irritated by Tsongas’s arguments about financial disclosure, Cronin again asked Tsongas to divulge his clients’ names. Tsongas unleashed a stratagem he had thought of between the debates but which came as a surprise to campaign staff. He simply said that he would be in front of the Andover IRS facility the next morning with his client list. And he urged Cronin to join him with his tax returns. That night Richard Arenberg and Dennis Kanin worried about the legal issues involved in breaching attorney-client privilege. They feared that Tsongas’s disbarment would work against their campaign. Volunteers hurriedly called as many of Tsongas’s clients as they could reach to ask permission. Arenberg and Kanin checked with local attorney Richard Donohue, then president of the Massachusetts Bar Association, who was not encouraging. Fred Faust also worried over what the lists would show voters. The campaign team had thought of Tsongas as a man of considerable resources, and they were surprised and worried about the possible reaction when the public

⁵² Lowell Sun, 22 October 1974.

saw that he sometimes charged as little as \$5 dollars in fees. His practice had earned very little in the previous two years.⁵³

Cronin did not appear in the morning. Tsongas gave the list to reporters anyway, asking that they “use judgment in releasing the names of those not involved in public cases.” The Lawrence Eagle-Tribune released some names, like that of John Wayne (a local contractor) and Edward Kennedy (not the famous senator), as a joke. Most other papers played the story straight. No clients stepped forward to object. Tsongas tied the incident to Watergate for the benefit of the many reporters who showed up to cover the event, calling Cronin’s reluctance to disclose his tax returns a “situation like Richard Nixon giving the transcripts of Watergate tapes without giving up the tapes themselves.”⁵⁴

Tsongas’s strategy threatened to backfire on him when Lowell Sun reporters discovered that Tsongas had accepted contributions from county employees, despite assertions to the contrary, possibly an oversight which D’Addario’s disordered desk made possible. A Tsongas spokesman noted that some of the donations came from assistant district attorneys whose salaries Tsongas did not set, and thus did not represent a conflict of interest. The other county employee was on another commissioner’s staff, so that person did not count, according to Tsongas. Another donation, for \$50 from a janitor on Tsongas’s payroll, would be returned. Tsongas used the opportunity to call once again for openness, urging people to make up their own minds about these disclosures. While Tsongas reacted humbly to these assertions about his disclosure, Cronin tended to react emotionally.

⁵³ Interviews: Fred Faust, 9 October 2003; Richard Arenberg, 24 October 2003; Patrick D’Addario, 24 September 2003; transcript of interview with Mehmed Ali and Nicola Tsongas, 11 February 2003, CLH.

⁵⁴ Interviews: Fred Faust, 9 October 2003; Richard Arenberg, 24 October 2003; Patrick D’Addario, 24 September 2003; transcript of interview with Mehmed Ali and Nicola Tsongas, 11 February 2003; Lowell Sun, 23 October 1974 (qtns.).

Questions about his finances clearly offended him personally. He felt that his privacy was under fire.⁵⁵

Cronin sponsored the third debate under circumstances intentionally designed to limit damage from the issues of credibility and openness. His format allowed no reporters into the studio, and each candidate spoke in alternating two-minute periods. Tsongas opened the debate by questioning its format and Cronin's unwillingness to debate on public television. He then criticized Cronin's claims of federal outlays in the district, and his unwillingness to release his income tax returns. Cronin responded that he had met the press "every day of [his] campaign" and produced a chart showing the federal grant figures for the district. In his next opportunity to speak Tsongas pointed out that the figures did not show Cronin's role in those grants, if any, and that the chart gave Cronin credit for part of Morse's term in Congress. "You're announcing the contracts as if you deserve all the credit. I think people see through that." Under another attack for not disclosing his tax returns, Cronin said that he had revealed everything about his income that he intended to reveal, that "it was the IRS' job to determine if there is any wrongdoing," and that he had been audited. Cronin again announced that he expected to announce an oil refinery proposal for the Lowell-Dracut area by January, a document which would outline "where and what type of refinery would be built." The two clashed again on Mostek, which Cronin described as being in a "holding pattern." Tsongas, bringing the documents in again as evidence that the move had been cancelled, noted the Lowell Sun story about Mostek selling the buildings.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Lowell Sun, 23 October 1974.

⁵⁶ Lowell Sun, 24 October 1974.

Cronin charged that Tsongas, as a commissioner, had increased county taxes. Intended to put Tsongas on the defensive, the charge only illuminated once again Cronin's willingness to fudge facts and figures. Reporters for the Lowell Sun pointed out that Cronin was "selectively citing" those figures: "[T]he changes in assessments for county costs . . . were the result of change in state legislation, which while increasing county costs for the large suburbs, substantially decreased costs for the more urban areas of the Fifth District."⁵⁷

As the campaign drew to a close, the Lowell Sun published extended interviews with political candidates. Tsongas's appeared first. Reporters began with a silly question about his running for office while he was a Middlesex County Commissioner. Tsongas took the question seriously, however, saying that he had been very careful not to abuse his office, and that it was always his first priority. Then the team from the Sun asked what he had done to attract new industry to the Fifth District as commissioner. Tsongas replied that voters had elected him with certain expectations and mandates that he felt he had fulfilled while in office. "The obligation that I had in 1969 was to bring in a professional city administration—that is what I ran on. We also talked about doing something about the drug problem and the elderly. In those three areas, we met our mandate." He added that, in running for Middlesex county commissioner, his "reform platform was quite clear, that we had certain responsibilities—the training school, the court house, the patronage, Walden Pond, those kinds of things," and he had "fulfilled that mandate." Open, earnest, and calm, he denominated the goals he had met: closing the training school, completing the East Cambridge court house, reducing abuse in the patronage system, and "doing something about the county system per se." Tsongas wanted to devolve county functions to municipal

⁵⁷ Lowell Sun, 27 October 1974.

and state governments entirely and he vowed to continue his efforts, whether or not he won the election. After Tsongas responded politely to a few questions about Cronin, reporters again turned to the issue of leaving his office of Commissioner in the middle of a term.

“You have no feeling of letting down your supporters by now seeking to walk out on the job that you were elected to do?” Tsongas noted that the people who worked hard to get him elected were, in many cases, the same people working hard to send him to Congress.⁵⁸

When reporters turned to economic issues, Tsongas emphasized that “the Urban National Park is the one meaningful hope for the future. There is nothing that has been suggested that approaches the potential of the National Park. . . .” But Cronin had done little to support that project, he noted. “Four years after the bill was introduced, what we have is a \$150,000 study which may or may not make it through the Senate.” Tsongas contrasted Cronin’s role with that of state officials, who had already devoted \$9.2 million to the project. “The state’s involvement after five months is 60 times greater than the federal government’s involvement after four years. My feeling is that a Democrat elected from this District working with House majority leader, Mr. O’Neill, has a far greater chance of getting the National Park funded than we do at the present time.”⁵⁹

His questioners eventually turned to the proposed refinery. “I don’t know of any example, anywhere, of something that has so much potential, both for good and for bad, to an area, not only to Dracut, but to Methuen, Andover, Lowell and Lawrence, that has been discussed behind closed doors exclusively.” Cronin’s statements about eleven oil companies had become “one or two,” he noted. “The City Manager of Lowell, the selectmen of Dracut,

⁵⁸ Lowell Sun, 29 October 1974.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

the Mayor of Lawrence, the town councils of Methuen and the selectmen of Andover have no idea about what is going on,” Tsongas said. “I don’t think, given the kinds of examples we have brought up previously, that the Congressman has established a record of credibility.” When questioned about the energy crisis, Tsongas maintained that Ford needed to do something about oil prices and U.S. dependence upon foreign oil. He did not see an oil refinery solving the problem but instead felt that a viable solution would be nuclear power: “The investment of capital in terms of technology to build safe nuclear power plants is within the talents and resources of this country. It has just not been done. We built a nuclear power plant and it is shut down because of all kinds of technical problems. The U.S. has the capability of doing better than that.” The Sun’s panel also asked him several questions about campaign donations from county employees, so Tsongas patiently discussed the issue. Unlike Cronin, Tsongas never bristled at questions, leading many to believe that he had little to hide.⁶⁰

The next day The Sun featured an interview with Cronin. Cronin listed pushing the Park Bill through the House as first among his long string of successes and cited the federal contracts he brought to the district. When reporters asked for specific examples of such contracts and grants, Cronin named a grant for Avco for cold-process desalinization research. He launched into a complicated story showing the amount of work involved in securing that grant, which had involved bringing a congressional committee to Wilmington’s Avco plant and giving them an on-site inspection of its facility. Reporters noted the facility’s

⁶⁰ Ibid.

location—North Carolina—and asked the size of the grant. Cronin answered \$500,000—not terribly effective evidence of Cronin’s efforts.⁶¹

When questioned directly on the refinery, Cronin remained optimistic. Asked to name which oil companies were still interested, Cronin told reporters to wait until January, hinting once again that some refinery projects had been killed already through divulging the names of companies. Reporters pressed him about the sale of Mostek’s building. “How can a company put up for sale a building in which it intends to launch production? Does it make sense that Mostek would want to sell the building if it intended to use the facility?” Cronin called such questions “unreasonable” and asserted paradoxically that the sale would make the company stronger and thus more likely to expand in Lowell when it was able to do so. When The Sun quizzed him on the disparity in unemployment rates, he blamed the Division of Employment and Security (DES).⁶²

Reporters relentlessly questioned his credibility, asking whether he had been aware of the DES’s change before the Chamber of Commerce dinner. Cronin replied that he had not been, since the DES had changed its methods just two weeks before. The Sun corrected him, pointing out that the change had occurred four months prior to the Chamber of Commerce dinner. Cronin weakly noted the complexity of the issue. Then reporters asked whether his ignorance of the change was a problem in and of itself and whether ignorance was in fact his defense. When they eventually asked, point blank, whether unemployment was up or down in the district since he took office, Cronin simply stated a falsehood: “The unemployment situation in the Fifth District has been improved considerably since the

⁶¹ Lowell Sun, 30 October 1974.

⁶² *Ibid.*

addition of several thousand jobs over the past two years.” He again pointed to all of the contracts he had brought into the district. The reporters continued to bear down on him, noting that, even after he had caught his error on a Boston radio station, he had still claimed that the rate had dropped from 10 to 7 percent. The Sun asked Cronin if that were true. He hedged a bit, then asked angrily, “If there are more people working today than were working two years ago, doesn’t that mean that unemployment has been lessened?” A reporter shot back, “If there are more unemployed, doesn’t it mean that unemployment is worse?” Cronin responded lamely, “There again, you are getting into the statistics.”⁶³

The panel also questioned him on the issue of his trusts, about which they had unearthed even more information. Cronin had apparently hired an architect to work on a house in Washington, DC, but had not paid the architect the entire fee, and the architect had taken him to court. Because of the lawsuit, the Tsongas team was able to get a copy of documents Cronin had signed as “owner” of the property, despite the fact that he maintained that Punchard Realty Trust owned all of the houses in which he lived. Cronin told the panel that he had told the architect that he owned the house because he wanted him to begin work immediately. The architect, however, told a reporter that Cronin told him nothing about the trusts until the case was brought to court. (The issue of Cronin’s Maryland house surfaced again that night when the Local 49 Carpenters Union met to decide which candidate to endorse. Cronin had employed the Norman Construction Company, which allegedly did not hire union carpenters. The Local 49 decided not to endorse anyone that late in the game.)⁶⁴

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Lowell Sun, 30 October 1974 (qtns.); 31 October 1974.

The Sun's panel also quizzed Cronin on his claim that he helped bring a Hewlett-Packard plant to Andover, noting that the announcement came only one week after he became a congressman. Cronin replied that his efforts with that company had begun while he was selectman for Andover. When quizzed on the National Park, he claimed credit for getting the bill out of the House and up to the Senate and added, "It is now entirely up to the two Senators from Massachusetts to determine whether it is going to pass the Senate before the end of this session."⁶⁵

Clement Costello continued to support Cronin in the campaign's final days. Dismissing Tsongas's critiques, he stated that he was inclined to give Cronin "the benefit of the doubt" regarding federal contracts and attracting industry. He based his argument on the proposition that Cronin, a businessman, would better serve the economic development of the district than could Tsongas, a lawyer. He noted that Cronin had made mistakes, citing Mostek, the unemployment rate, and others, but forgave him. "If the Congressman learns one thing from this campaign, we hope it will be the value of silence in the face of unconfirmed facts." He also said that Cronin should learn to keep his constituents better informed and not to exaggerate so much and be so "self-serving." Costello made much of Tsongas's work on the County Commission: "When these people voted for Commissioner Tsongas, they did not anticipate that he would turn his back on them two years later,"—a "repudiation of his compact with the people who elected him." Under a political cartoon showing Tsongas running from a County Commission meeting in a flurry of papers and a

⁶⁵ Lowell Sun, 30 October 1974.

cloud of dust, Costello questioned Tsongas's character, and, paradoxically, worried about the appointment of less reform-minded commissioner.⁶⁶

When Cronin detailed in a campaign ad the grants and contracts he helped bring to the district, Tsongas quickly called the ad deceptive, and quoted a letter from an Air Force Colonel as support. "Contracts are awarded by the Department of Defense scientists on the competitive basis of their expertise, not on some favoritism basis wherein Congressmen vie with each other and somehow divvy up the largess." Cronin countered that Tsongas simply did not understand the system by which contracts were awarded. "There are a wide variety of pressures, not just political pressures, which go into a contract award." In particular, Tsongas criticized contracts to Raytheon for which Cronin claimed some credit, noting that the Hawk and Sparrow missiles were initiated in the 1950s and that the Sidewinder began in the 1960s, long before Cronin became a congressman. Tsongas also noted that some of the funds for which Cronin took credit came through sub-contracts from Raytheon and that he found it hard to imagine how Cronin could have had anything to do with them. Tsongas then noted that one contractor had laid off between 400 and 600 workers while Cronin was in office. "If he [Cronin] is going to take credit for the contracts, it would seem logical that he would also take credit for the plant closings," he said.⁶⁷

On November 2, Senator Edward Kennedy campaigned for Tsongas in Lawrence, Andover, and Lowell, appearing at a \$25 per head fundraiser at the home of school committeeman Shultz in Lawrence and at a \$100 per head fundraiser at the home of attorney Joseph Donahue in Lowell. He also stumped for Tsongas at a large public rally at Lowell's

⁶⁶ Lowell Sun, 31 October 1974 ("the," "If"); 1 November 1974 ("When," "repudiation").

⁶⁷ Lowell Sun, 1 November 1974.

Commodore Ballroom, where he assailed the economic policies of the Ford administration and hailed the working-class and consumer alliances of the Democratic Party.⁶⁸

At the Sun Costello attempted a few more times to undermine Tsongas, alleging that he was trying to hide his association with John Kenneth Galbraith, a founding member of Americans for Democratic Action, who appeared at a Tsongas fundraiser in Bedford, and that he was trying to hide the help he had received from John Kerry. But those who had followed the election, especially Costello's own reporters, knew that Tsongas never tried to hide anything, a point that distinguished him from Cronin. Reporters even unearthed a shady land deal that pointed to Cronin's biggest funders, as well as a legal firm defending the legislator against a civil suit in Washington. While Costello raged, his own reporters called Tsongas "open to a fault." One said, "If you asked Tsongas the serial number of his shoe he would take it off and hand it to you."⁶⁹

Cronin's credibility took another hit when two local executives disputed his list of federal grants and contracts. The week before the election, An Wang, the president of Wang Laboratories, asserted that Cronin's ads overstated his actual involvement. Wang, a contributor of \$500 to Tsongas for Congress, put the matter in terms that called all of Cronin's claims into question: "I am not aware of any involvement he has had with our contracts over the past year or two." Wang noted the bulk of his contracts for which Cronin took credit were not with the Department of Defense anyway, but with the General Services Administration, for calculators and electronic typewriters. To Cronin's claim that he had been instrumental in putting Wang on the congressional equipment list, Wang countered

⁶⁸ Lowell Sun, 3 November 1974.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

that those contracts totaled only about \$30,000 per year. Moreover, those contracts had been in place for eight or nine years, and were renegotiated annually but not through legislative action. Wang noted that he contacted senators and congressmen about the renewals as “a courtesy.” The president of Raytheon Corporation added that he never intended to imply congressional involvement with the contract process. Raytheon officials claimed that they had “no specific knowledge of any help provided by Congressman Cronin for any government work.”⁷⁰

When Cronin announced, on November 4, the long-awaited grant for the monorail study, Sun reporters, now routinely checking his statements, called the supposed recipients, and quickly found Cronin in another lie. Cronin countered that recipients had not yet been informed, which seemed unlikely. He announced that another firm was coming to Lawrence, a speaker cabinet manufacturing company expected to have payroll totaling about \$400,000 per year. But it was hard to believe anything he said at that point.⁷¹

Despite a very rainy election day, and in marked contrast to the turnout in the rest of the country, Lowell had a heavy voter turnout. A close gubernatorial race, a ballot initiative on rent control, and a close Secretary of State race helped, as did the exciting race for the Fifth District representative. Although a recent newspaper poll had put Tsongas ahead by 5 percentage points, worried campaign workers recalled that the same poll had in 1972 predicted Cronin’s loss to John Kerry.⁷²

⁷⁰ Lowell Sun, 4 November 1974.

⁷¹ Lowell Sun, 4 and 5 November 1974.

⁷² Lowell Sun, 3 November 1974.

Cronin waited for the first returns in the Andover Country Club. He gave a short speech at 10 p.m. when the first dismal returns started to arrive, telling his supporters that there did not seem to be any “issues” to the campaign. Then he made his way to the Tsongas headquarters at the Tewksbury Holiday Inn. Threading his way through a “jubilant” crowd of more than five hundred, Cronin met Tsongas at the podium and congratulated him. Tsongas had won a seat that Republicans had dominated since local Civil War hero Benjamin Butler, a Fifth District Whig, had presided over President Andrew Johnson’s impeachment. Cronin conceded that Watergate may have been an issue but declared that inflation and the economy were the key “frustrations” of area voters. Tsongas beat Cronin in Dracut, the site of the proposed oil refinery by a 2 to 1 margin. Tsongas spent the next morning at the gates of Raytheon headquarters in Lexington, thanking voters.⁷³

⁷³ Lowell Sun, 6 November 1974.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ECONOMIC ROOTS OF AN ENERGY AGENDA

The city of Lowell owed its very existence to an antebellum search for energy. In 1810, Lowell's namesake, Francis Cabot Lowell, voyaged to England for a much-needed rest. While there, he visited Manchester, a factory town that produced massive quantities of textiles with industrial machinery that harnessed the power of water. The enterprising Lowell learned all he could about the new Cartwright power loom, the machine behind the revolution in production, memorizing the closely guarded secrets of its construction. Soon after his trip to Manchester, Lowell met a Bostonian business associate, Nathan Appleton, in Scotland. Scotland's experience with industrialization gave them hope of bringing industrial technology to Massachusetts without turning it into another Manchester, a bleak industrial city. Upon returning to the United States, Lowell raised \$400,000 to create a corporation to manufacture cotton cloth in Waltham, Massachusetts. Finished in 1813, the Waltham mill realized Lowell's dream of a factory that would take in cotton as a raw material and produce finished cloth. However, Waltham's sluggish Charles River did not create enough power to expand sufficiently. But just to the northwest, in East Chelmsford, the Merrimack River fell thirty-two feet over its Pawtucket Falls, providing ample power to drive mill machinery. And the Pawtucket Canal, East Chelmsford's largest, had already been excavated for transportation, and then abandoned in favor of the new Middlesex Canal, a more direct route to Boston. The owners of the land surrounding the canal were anxious to sell, having been bankrupted by the opening of the Middlesex Canal. Lowell's partners (who called themselves the Boston Associates) purchased the land covertly and relatively cheaply. Then

they began to build, incorporating their city as Lowell, in honor of the project's "informing soul," who died before seeing the first mills constructed there. For the Boston Associates the more difficult problem to resolve was how to attract labor to use this abundant source of energy.¹

Political analyst William Schneider has argued that many in Paul Tsongas's congressional class began with high ideals about interest-free politics, but then quickly focused upon protecting their incumbency. Tsongas stood in subtle contrast. He concentrated upon serving his district and fulfilling campaign promises, and in doing so, created a new constituency. In the middle of the 1970s, Lowellians, and others in Massachusetts's Fifth Congressional District, faced high unemployment coupled with high energy prices. After Tsongas picked staff members and settled into his new position, economic development efforts and energy policy consumed him throughout his first term. He devoted one staff member half-time, as well as considerable amounts of his own time, to an effort to create a national park in Lowell. He charged three others with directly assisting business development in the district through the creation of a Jobs Resources Service (JRS). The JRS meetings in Lowell led to the development of private sources of funding to bolster the quest for the national park. Under Tsongas's leadership JRS's Washington coordinator devoted considerable effort to bringing new federal energy research and development

¹ Thomas Dublin, Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell Massachusetts, 1826-1860 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979); Lowell National Historical Park, Lowell, the Story of an Industrial City (United States: Division of Publications, National Park Service, 1992); Peter Temin, ed., Engines of Enterprise, an Economic History of New England (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000); Walter Licht, Industrializing America: The Nineteenth Century (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); Theodore Steingberg, Nature Incorporated: Industrialization and the Waters of New England (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1991); Arthur L. Eno, ed., Cotton Was King: A History of Lowell Massachusetts (Manchester: The New Hampshire Publishing Company in collaboration with the Lowell Historical Society, 1976); and C. C. Chase. "Brief Biographical Notices of the Prominent Citizens of the Town of Lowell—1826 to 1836." in Contributions of The Old Residents' Historical Association, Lowell, Mass. Vol. IV. No. 4 (Lowell, Massachusetts: Morning Mail Print, 1891).

funding to the southern part of the district. Tsongas became actively engaged in energy policy discussions immediately, recognizing that New England had been particularly hard hit by the oil crisis. He scheduled energy hearings in the Fifth District and presented his findings to President Gerald Ford, and he actively pushed solar funding, with some success. When the time came to stand for reelection, Tsongas's combined economic development and energy policy work had begun to create a new constituency including high-tech businesspeople and environmentalists. Voters reelected him by a wide margin.²

The aftermath of the 1974 election was an exiting and busy time. Tsongas had to choose his staff, tie up loose ends, and move to Washington. He had begun appointing staff even before the election. Fred Faust had served on the campaign staff under the condition that, if Tsongas won, Faust could go to Washington and work on the urban national park proposal. Faust, a former radio newsman, would also serve as his press secretary. For other staffers, Tsongas had to look no farther than his own home. Dennis Kanin and others on the campaign team had lived with the Tsongas family during the campaign. Tsongas asked Kanin to be his administrative aide. In late November Kanin went to Washington to begin planning the transition while Tsongas took a week off to relax in Cape Cod with his family. Soon, Tsongas asked Richard Arenberg to be his legislative assistant and "issues guy," and Patrick D'Addario to become the Washington Coordinator of the Job Resources Section that Tsongas viewed as the centerpiece of his program to address economic issues in the

² Patrick D'Addario interview, 24 September 2003; transcript of Mehmed Ali interview of Richard Arenberg, 23 May 2003, University of Massachusetts Lowell Center for Lowell History (CLH hereafter); William Schneider, "J.F.K.'s Children: The Class of '74," The Atlantic Monthly, March 1989, 35-38.

Fifth District. D'Addario was to work with local coordinators Stephen Joncas in Lowell and Daniel Tearno in Lawrence.³

Tsongas scrambled in December and January to find a replacement for his seat on the Middlesex County Commission, threatening to keep his seat when faced with a candidate he had replaced in 1972. Eventually the other commissioners offered a moderately acceptable alternative and Tsongas resigned. In the second week of January 1975, Tsongas attended his final meeting as a Middlesex County Commissioner. One commissioner, Lester Ralph, did not emerge from his office during the meeting. Tsongas discussed the widening of a Sudbury road with town residents with the help of Ralph's chief aide, Andrew Puglia. The third commissioner had not bothered even to send an assistant. Tsongas was disappointed in the lack of dedication and seriousness the others invested in their positions.⁴

Tsongas enjoyed the excitement of the Democratic Caucus proceedings that year. When a newly enacted reform allowed him and the other forty-three freshmen Democrats to have a voice in key elections and policy decisions, he seized the opportunity. He favored taking the power to assign committees away from the Congressional Ways and Means Committee and giving it directly to the Democratic Caucus. He charged the powerful Wilbur Mills' Committee with obstructionism that exemplified "the stagnation that people want Congress to be rid of." He actively participated in the activities of the "Watergate Babies," and they elected him secretary of the freshman class. Later, he sided with the Banking Committee's fourth ranking Democrat, Henry Reuss (D-WI), as Reuss attempted to

³ Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003; transcript of Mehmed Ali's interview of Fred Faust, 13 February 2003, University of Massachusetts Lowell Center for Lowell History; Lowell Sun, 8 November 1974, 7 January 1975.

⁴ Lowell Sun, 17 December 1974, 13 January 1975.

wrest a committee chairmanship from eighty-one-year-old Wright Patman (D-Texas). Patman expected to retire without running for the 1976 elections, and many in the committee were willing to let him serve out his last term without a challenge. Although Tsongas had not wanted a spot on the committee, he jumped into the fray. Later, when the freshmen began to lose power, Tsongas blamed laziness. He believed that many of his colleagues were too easily swayed by the opinions of legislators they respected. They failed to spend time forming their own opinions. After the initial excitement, the routine on Capitol Hill soon reminded Tsongas of the Middlesex County Commission. He worked diligently and attended committee and subcommittee meetings whenever possible. And he expected the same of others. He wrote to House Speaker Carl Albert (D-OK) complaining that many representatives left on Friday and returned on Monday, leaving the House inquorate (short of a quorum). Even worse, in his mind, all recording stopped when the House was inquorate, so the official record bore no evidence of representatives' attendance.⁵

Setting up his space in the Cannon Office Building, Tsongas had rearranged the furniture to match his memory of F. Bradford Morse's layout. He believed that Morse had been an effective representative and he pragmatically followed Morse's example. Tsongas quickly became known as a serious yet informal representative. When his new congressional staff went to a welcome party the weekend before the start of the session, they stopped at the office afterwards and Tsongas met them in the Cannon Office Building's marble hallway. They were laughing, in one case loudly enough to be heard "at the capitol," as Patrick

⁵ Lowell Sun, 2 December 1974 ("stagnation"), 15 January 1975; Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003; Tsongas to Carl Albert 21 February 1975, Box 178C, Tsongas Collection, University of Massachusetts Lowell Center for Lowell History (TC hereafter).

D’Addario finished a scotch he brought from the party. Tsongas stepped out of his office to meet them. “What’s going on?” he demanded.

“We’re coming back from a party,” D’Addario said.

“What’s that?” Tsongas asked.

“A scotch,” D’Addario replied.

A teetotaler, Tsongas asked incredulously, “A scotch?”

“It’s all they had,” D’Addario’s defended himself. The new representative turned unsympathetically on his heels and went back into his office. Tsongas barely recognized them on Monday morning. He treated them to a lecture on decorum and proper conduct in congressional offices. Despite that reprimand about conduct, he surprised others continuously with his unstudied lack of formality. Aides and interns often discussed business with other congressional aides, telling them “Paul’s” position on some piece of legislation, only to be asked with disbelief, “He lets you call him Paul?” He nearly missed his swearing-in when he left the House floor to remove cookie crumbs that his 11-month-old daughter Ashley had “cheerfully” ground into his suit coat.⁶

Committee appointments shape, to a large extent, the issues in which new representatives can actively participate. Many in Lowell had assumed that Tsongas would seek a seat on a committee focusing on foreign relations, particularly after newspapers reported him as the first Peace Corps volunteer to enter Congress. Tsongas had also often referred to his formative Peace Corps experiences while campaigning and while on the Lowell City Council. But he planned to follow in Representative Paul Cronin’s footsteps. He requested the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, a position that would

⁶ Patrick D’Addario interview, 24 September 2003; Lowell Sun, 20 January 1975 (qtn.).

enable him to push the urban park legislation, (Tsongas, like many others, believed incorrectly that Cronin had sought a place on that committee.) When the newspapers announced committee assignments, many were surprised to see him assigned to the Banking Committee. Tsongas knew very little about banking and had no apparent flair for it. Indeed, in the chaos of moving to Washington he failed to pay more than one student loan payment. The insurance company that bonded him filed suit to collect its money, and he quickly resumed payments after realizing his error. He rapidly made up for his lack of banking acumen, however. He threw himself into committee work and started studying banking. Often, his studies took place during his daily lunchtime run. David McCarthy, one of his congressional interns, tutored him that first year in office, beginning a Tsongas tradition of studious exercise. Eminently qualified, with a Ph.D. in economics from Johns Hopkins University and full of stamina from many years spent on collegiate rugby fields, the intern lectured Tsongas as they ran through the streets of Washington, DC. Tsongas listened intently, too winded to ask questions.⁷

Initially, Tsongas downplayed the importance of a congressman to his District's economy, saying, "Really, there is little that a single congressman can do for the economy of his district." But he hoped nevertheless that a congressman who devoted significant staff resources to such an effort might be able to make an impact. For the first half of the year the Job Resources Section, the centerpiece of his economic development program, played a predominantly reactive role, as the economy of the Fifth District continued to slide. As Christmas approached, Lowell businesses announced more than 1,000 layoffs. Unemployment in Greater Lowell had nearly doubled from the previous year. Although

⁷ Lowell Sun, 12 November 1972; Patrick D'Addario interview, 24 September 2003; transcript of Mehmed Ali's interview of Nicola Tsongas, 11 February 2003, CLH.

some businesses cautiously voiced optimism about being able to hire employees back in January, others announced that they were considering moving to other locations. The most alarming announcement came from Honeywell Corporation, which in early January announced that it would close its Lowell facility, despite previous assurances that it would discuss the matter with city officials prior to making a decision.⁸

Perhaps a congressman could not do much, but he could use his title to some advantage. In December of 1974 Tsongas met a schoolmate from law school in Washington. The man remembered Tsongas primarily as a waiter, since Tsongas had worked his way through Yale Law School waiting tables. Tsongas asked him, “What are you doing here?” He responded that he was an administrative aide to a new congressman and asked the same of Tsongas, who replied that he was one of the new congressmen. His schoolmate asked him how to pronounce his last name. The next month, when calling a Dartmouth College dean to provide a reference for a campaign worker, he asked to speak directly to the dean, giving his name: Congressman Tsongas. The dean’s secretary connected them immediately. Increasingly aware of the leverage that being a U.S. Representative provided, Tsongas asked local officials to form a task force to assist Honeywell with its transition, insisting that they attempt to move as many jobs as possible to the plant in nearby Billerica, rather than to more distant locations. Tsongas also learned that a congressman’s staff could play an effective public role. Although he urged his staff to operate independently, he stressed that it could use his title when necessary—especially where it mattered most for economic development in the Fifth District. The Job Resources Section sent a letter with Tsongas’s signature to 1,000 of the largest businesses in the district. It

⁸ Lowell Sun, 8, 10 (“really”) November, 13, 15 December 1974.

urged businesses to contact Tsongas's office for help. Tsongas's staffers brought him in only when they needed his personal and direct assistance.⁹

When the Job Resources Section responded to the threatened closure of the Air Force's Cambridge Research Lab (CRL) in Bedford, Tsongas played a more active part, since help had to come from Washington. CRL had contributed more than \$70 million in research contracts to local universities and distributed more than \$3.9 million in contracts to local businesses. The threatened move seemed politically motivated, because it made little sense. To move the center would have ruined a number of research projects underway and postponed results for more than two years while the equipment and staff regrouped in New Mexico. To save the CRL, Tsongas contacted Secretary of the Air Force Robert McLucas arguing that defense cutbacks had disproportionately affected his district and making other arguments to keep the facility. McLucas conducted a full review of the situation. Tsongas also arranged to testify with CRL representatives at hearings before the Appropriations Committee in March. By April of 1975, the Job Resources Section became more proactive. It planned meetings with economic development officials in many of the towns of the district, as well as bankers and industrial leaders. Its initial efforts focused on the old industrial towns of Greater Lowell, but it hoped to branch out. Patrick D'Addario realized that the computerized address lists generated for letters to fifth district businesses could help to catalogue the district's businesses. Upon finding that businesses in the district had little

⁹ Lowell Sun, 20 December 1974 ("what"), 10 January 1975; "Dear Businessman letter," Box B 13B, TC.

information about others in the same geographic location and decided to look into making the list publicly available.¹⁰

Oil refinery proponents contacted Tsongas soon after the election. In a letter congratulating Tsongas on his victory, Dracut Selectmen asked that he forward all refinery information for their consideration, assuming that he would be a more open conduit for refinery information than Cronin had been. He told them that the decision would be a “citizen’s decision” but that he would set up a refinery advisory panel in “late December or January.” Tsongas had checked during the election with experts in academia and the private sector, who told him a refinery for the area was not feasible. In December, Shell Oil Company representatives disclaimed any knowledge of any interested companies and believed it “highly unlikely” that Cronin had contacted the appropriate parties at Shell to discuss such a venture. They also pointed to a number of hurdles to bringing a refinery to the area and said it seemed uneconomical to pump crude oil all the way to Lowell and then back to the ocean for distribution. One executive compared such an effort to pumping oil to the top of Mount Wilson.¹¹

In December, Lowell Technological Institute’s refinery study panel halted its work and expressed concerns about the hydrocarbons a refinery would release into the air and the twenty million gallons of water that would be pulled out of the Merrimack River and replaced after cooling and processing crude oil. Study Director William T. Hogan noted that

¹⁰ Lowell Sun, 12 January 1975; Press Release, 13 January 1975 Box 123A, TC; David McCarthy memo to Patrick D’Addario, Dennis Kanin, Steve Joncas, and Dan Tearno from David, 14 April 1975, Box B13B, TC; Dennis Kanin memo to Tsongas, 17 April 1975, Box B13B, TC; Dennis Kanin memo to staff, 28 April 1975, Box B13B, TC; Patrick D’Addario memo to Staff 3 April 1975, Box 177C, TC.

¹¹ Lowell Sun, 11 November (“highly”), 1 December (“Citizens”) 1974. Shell executives were visiting newspapers all over the country to try to build public support in the wake of the criticisms leveled at them by the public during the energy crisis.

it would be up to the community to decide how clean the water had to be before its release into the Merrimack, which supplied drinking water for Lowell as well as more than a dozen communities downriver before flowing into the Atlantic. The panel also noted the damage that large, heavy tanker trucks would cause on local roads. It indicated the need for a new rail line, since the large steel plates from which refinery holding tanks are constructed could only be shipped by rail. Before completing its work, it awaited specific information about the size and type of the proposed refinery. Hogan's team had spent only \$20,000 out of the \$350,000 allocated. The Massachusetts Senate Ways and Means Committee subsequently froze the study funds pending an actual proposal.¹²

On December 29, Tsongas met briefly with outgoing Representative Cronin, who agreed to meet with Tsongas's refinery panel, but still refused to name interested companies. Tsongas asked the executive director of the Massachusetts Petroleum Council for his help identifying such companies. In January, Tsongas's advisory panel still had no proposal to review. He asked five members of the Citizens' Advisory Committee to form a nine-member board out of citizens interested and "committed to the public's right to know" to study any proposals that might emerge. He also asserted the need to look more carefully into conservation and contended that it was "time for Americans to realize that we can't continue to waste energy and other resources any longer." Later on that month, Tsongas announced the members of the committee, which included both proponents and opponents of the idea. Selectmen in Dracut immediately opposed Tsongas's panel appointments. Dracut selectmen were also angry that the LTI preliminary assessment of environmental and economic impacts was released without their notification and that Tsongas's panel

¹² Lowell Sun, 31 December 1974.

announcement came without warning, too. Tsongas assured Dracut selectmen that he had no intention of infringing upon their rights to pass on any proposal. He also offered to expand the panel to include more representatives from Lowell and Dracut government. He then asked to meet with them on February 15 to smooth their strained feelings.¹³

By February, Cronin still promised to reveal refinery plans in the middle of the month. But on February 20, he changed his position, claiming that a company still planned a refinery for Dracut but that “until Congress gets off their duffs and solves the energy crisis you can’t expect somebody to put up millions of dollars.” Cronin’s proposals never materialized. In April, representatives from Saber Oil expressed the company’s interest to Tsongas, who referred them to Dracut selectmen. The selectmen met with representatives from the company’s Corpus Christi headquarters, who explained that they were simply examining the issue and had no proposal. But they assured the refinery committee that any refinery they built would “look like a public library and smell like a perfume factory.” Although Saber representatives told the committee that their interest would probably open the floodgates for other companies, they were the last company to express curiosity publicly. Later, Saber representatives explained that they needed assurance of a supply of crude oil, and since there was no acceptable pipeline to Dracut or a deepwater port, they would not be able to do anything. For once, Cronin had spoken the truth. At least one company awaited stability that only a national energy policy could create.¹⁴

Tsongas’s involvement in national energy policy discussions began with President Gerald Ford’s State of the Union Address on January 13, 1975. Ford described the energy

¹³ Tsongas letter to John F. Battles, 9 January 1975 (“committed”), Box 156C, TC; Tsongas Press Release, 24 January 1975, Box 123A, TC; Lowell Sun, 30 December 1974, 24 (“time”), 27 January 1975; 12 February 1975.

¹⁴ Lowell Sun, 2, 20 February 1975 (“until”), 19 April 1975 (“look”), 1 May 1975, 1 August 1975.

problem historically and pointed to 1970 as the turning point for U.S. energy supplies. After 1970 the country's energy surplus no longer existed, he claimed, which allowed the "latent power of the oil cartel" to "emerge in full force." Ford's proposed solution to the crisis thus focused mainly on increasing the supply of domestic oil. He proposed three goals: to reduce imports by 1 million barrels per year in 1975 and again in 1976; to end vulnerability to economic disruption by foreign suppliers by 1985; and to develop energy technology and resources and regain the country's status as a supplier to the rest of the world by 2000. In the short term, Ford's goals translated into opening restricted petroleum reserves, converting electrical plants to coal, increasing taxes on imported oil, and decontrolling energy prices. He wanted to increase taxes and fees on imported crude oil by \$1 in February, another \$1 in March, and another \$1 in April. Although he suggested that he would take action to see to it that the impact would not have disproportionate effects on any particular region of the United States, he did not specify the means by which he would achieve that goal. In addition to those administrative changes, he requested that Congress act within ninety days to increase import taxes to \$2 per barrel and deregulate the prices of newly-tapped natural gas deposits, while putting new excise taxes on natural gas. He announced that he would decontrol domestic crude prices by administrative measures, while introducing a windfall profits tax to ensure that domestic oil companies did not profit unduly from decontrol.¹⁵

Increased domestic production of crude oil would come from the Outer Continental Shelf, including the Georges Bank tracts right off the coast of Massachusetts and the Naval petroleum reserve in Alaska. Ford asked Congress to amend the Clean Air Act to allow more coal use and to enact strip mining legislation to permit increased production of coal.

¹⁵ Congressional Quarterly, Energy Policy (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, Inc. 1981), 249.

He also called for changes in legislation to expedite the development of nuclear power and the construction of 200 major nuclear power plants by 1985. Finally, he addressed conservation measures, including thermal efficiency standards for new buildings, insulation tax credits, direct insulation credits for low-income families, and legislation to defer automobile pollution standards for five years.¹⁶

New England had not received much help from oil equalization efforts already underway, and Ford's proposals to alleviate regional impacts seemed to Tsongas and others even less helpful. Massachusetts residents saw their tax bills increase, too, as the amount the Commonwealth paid for power and heating jumped in 1974 by 63 percent. Henry Lee of the Massachusetts Energy Policy Office believed that the equalization program could lower heating oil costs by two cents per gallon, but federal officials were much less optimistic. The regional director of the Federal Energy Administration said that he would be surprised if such a program lowered prices at all, but that it might help to keep them from increasing any more. Additionally, New Englanders found that the savings they would get from the Oil Equalization Program were less than expected because the program had lumped New York and New England together, which made it appear that New England would get twice the relief it eventually would.¹⁷

Tsongas watched carefully as more powerful legislators reacted against Ford's plans. In the Senate, Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Henry "Scoop" Jackson (D-WA) filed a 90-day resolution to block any tariff increase. Kennedy blasted the president's proposals as regressive and injurious to New England. Although researchers at the New England Fuel

¹⁶ Congressional Quarterly, Energy Policy, 248-49.

¹⁷ Lowell Sun, 5, 6 13 December 1974.

Institute estimated that the oil tax would only cost \$152 per family in New England over the course of a year, Kennedy claimed that the tax could completely absorb Ford's proposed \$1,000 tax cut. Massachusetts Republican Senator Edward Brooke refrained from criticism but noted that the oil tax would be a burden to all New England consumers. Northeastern governors also attacked the Ford energy plan, particularly the provisions that most affected energy prices in the Northeast—increasing the import tax on crude oil and decontrolling the domestic price of oil. Their estimates showed that the program might cost New Englanders two billion dollars annually and 60,000 jobs. On January 23, 1975, a group of northeastern governors meeting with President Ford came away “angry . . . and clearly dissatisfied.” When they argued against his proposal to increase the oil tariff, he only responded by urging their support of his plan. The New England Congressional Caucus made plans to discuss the increase. Tsongas claimed that “any tax cut would simply be a drop in the bucket compared to increasing inflation and recession in our area.”¹⁸

Tsongas immediately received a storm of letters and telegrams opposing Ford's proposals, especially increased oil taxes. One noted that the administration might as well put “old people . . . up against the wall and shoot them.” Another noted that its senders had turned their thermostat down to 62 degrees and were afraid of catching pneumonia. Tsongas organized hearings on Ford's energy proposals in Lexington, Lawrence, and Lowell, for the third week in February. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss Ford's energy proposals and to let his constituents know what he thought. Tsongas chaired the hearings and introduced Robert W. Mitchell, the Regional Federal Energy Administration Director, whom he had invited to present the administration's views. These first hearings of

¹⁸ Lowell Sun, 4, 16, 17 (“any”), 24 (“angry”), 27 January 1975.

Tsongas's congressional career were relatively informal. He did not record participants or invite them to submit prepared statements. But comments collected at their conclusion painted a picture of an angry, confused, and largely ignorant public. Few consistent themes emerged, other than nearly unanimous opposition to the President's proposals. Tsongas's comments demonstrated some ambivalence about certain aspects of energy policy. He noted at one point that simply cutting imports would have unpredictable consequences for the national economy, since the United States also needed the dollars that OPEC countries reinvested in the United States. Tsongas summed up the hearing by saying that the oil import tariff was the main problem with the president's proposal and that people wanted more rapid development of alternative sources of energy. Most present saw coal conversion as the best solution to New England's energy crisis. Others mentioned the need for alternative energy research, conservation and rationing, followed by refineries, and exploration. Only one comment placed a high priority on nuclear power.¹⁹

Tsongas usually voted against the interests of the oil companies. On February 25, 1975, for example, he voted to attach the oil depletion allowance cut-off to the tax reduction bill. The depletion allowance, originally intended to stimulate investment in the industry, became generally acknowledged as unnecessary after the Arab Oil Embargo. The amendment passed 152-98. Tsongas characterized support for the amendment as "broad" and claimed that it constituted "the first major blow to the oil lobby," which he believed was "responsible for seeing that major oil companies can take advantage of huge tax loopholes

¹⁹ Letters, Box 156C, TC ("old"); "Report on Energy Hearings of Massachusetts Fifth Congressional District," Box 170A, TC.

while reaping outrageous profits.” Triumphant, he claimed that the “great rip-off of the American taxpayer which has taken place over the past 50 years is finally near an end.”²⁰

Tsongas continued to study the issues. He had no solution in mind, but he wanted to draw more attention to New England’s energy woes. Tsongas and freshman Democrats met with President Ford in early March at the White House. When asked to introduce themselves, Tsongas stood and proudly said, “I’m Paul Tsongas from energy starved Massachusetts,” and gave Ford a copy of the transcribed comments from his energy hearings. He later rationalized his candor by noting that Ford had invited them to a discussion of energy issues. Moreover, after he had listened to Ford and his other invitees, including Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and FEA Administrator Frank Zarb, Tsongas believed that they had an “obligation to listen to him in return.”²¹

President Ford had correctly characterized the interrelated problems of energy and economy as “complex as the devil.” The previous representative from Massachusetts’s Fifth Congressional District had blamed that complexity, in part, for his electoral loss to Tsongas, claiming that reporters did not have the time to build expertise in the complicated issues that he dealt with as a congressman. Tsongas, in contrast, reacted to complexity by embracing it. He reacted to others’ ignorance by trying to educate. And he truly believed that there were no issues that reasonable people could not address reasonably. But he chose his battles carefully. By March, he had begun to believe that the national debate about oil price deregulation would not help Massachusetts. His experiences with oil companies had already led him to see that they had a great deal of political power that could not be thwarted head-

²⁰ Tsongas Press Release, 25 February 1975, Box 170A, TC.

²¹ Tsongas Press Release, 4 March 1975, Box 170A, TC.

on. Instead, the Fifth District had to look to energy alternatives. Tsongas's discussions with Morris Udall (D-Arizona), chair of the Energy and Environment Subcommittee of the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, led Udall to suggest that Tsongas examine nuclear alternatives in the Fifth District as a way of focusing additional attention on "the nuclear question." Tsongas scheduled a debate at Lowell Technological Institute for April Fools Day and acted as the moderator.²²

Lowell Technological Institute (LTI) was friendly turf for such a debate. The college had recently finished building a controversial and expensive nuclear reactor. At the start of 1975 it was ready to receive nuclear fuel. Although it was too small to generate substantial electricity, many locals hoped for expansion. Some suggested that the Merrimack River could generate steam for power just as others wished to use it to cool and refine petroleum. LTI enrolled 130 students in its new nuclear engineering program that year, as well as 56 students to study radiological sciences. Some hoped that a nuclear reactor could provide energy and jobs, too. The debate included nuclear proponents Dr. Joseph Turnage of New England Electric and Dr. Ian Forbes, chair of the LTI Department of Nuclear Engineering. Forbes had called attention to himself by challenging Ralph Nader to a televised debate on nuclear energy and accusing Nader of using "scare tactics" to oppose nuclear power. The opposing side of the debate included Dr. James MacKensie, chair of the Union of Concerned Scientists, and Daniel Ford, executive director of the Union of Concerned Scientists. Daniel Ford had previously led a movement to shut down the Pilgrim nuclear reactor and power plant in Plymouth, Massachusetts. Tsongas hoped that the forum would "serve as a model in an attempt to establish a public dialogue on the future of nuclear

²² Lowell Sun, 6 November, 7 ("complex") 29 December 1974; Press Release, 18 March 1975, Box 170A, TC.

energy.” He also wanted the debate to focus on the risks and benefits of nuclear power and to be as non-technical as possible. Tsongas used this hearing, as he would others later in his career, to learn and to inform. He believed that dialogue between honest participants would unearth viable solutions. One reporter later characterized Tsongas’s hearings as “the scorpions in a jar” method for arriving at decisions, meaning that Tsongas liked to create adversarial situations that unearthed the roots of opposing positions.²³

Nuclear power carried substantial potential for resolving the problems of the energy crisis. It also yielded new ones. On the same week that LTI completed construction of its reactor, Edward Teller, father of the atomic bomb, called nuclear power the “only feasible solution,” and characterized environmentalist objections to it as “exaggerated.” Many in Massachusetts disagreed. Environmentalists were delaying the licensing of an addition to Boston Edison’s Pilgrim Reactor in Plymouth Massachusetts, as well as a new reactor complex for Seabrook, New Hampshire, just beyond the Massachusetts border. Also the same week LTI completed construction of its reactor, the Atomic Energy Commission reported nuclear materials—including 40 pounds of uranium and 13 pounds of plutonium—missing and unaccounted for. The AEC’s attribution of the loss to bookkeeping errors or microscopic losses during production did little to quell Tsongas’s fears about weapons proliferation and terrorism. The AEC added that it would be relatively easy for someone engaged in the production of fissionable materials to steal them. Tsongas hoped that the debate at LTI could illuminate some of the many issues surrounding nuclear power, and that he would be able to understand better the positions of his constituents on this important source of energy. Later in his first term he chaired a series of nuclear safety hearings for

²³ Lowell Sun, 29 December 1974 (“scare”); Tsongas Press Release, 18 March 1975, Box 123A, TC; Boston Globe, 4 April 1979 (“scorpions”).

Udall's subcommittee and toured fifteen nuclear sites to question workers about plant safety. His tour unearthed significant theft risks at all of the plants.²⁴

Focusing on alternative energy sources like nuclear power also allowed Tsongas to avoid wasting time combating oil companies directly. Although a large percentage of the people in the United States blamed major oil companies for the energy crisis, Tsongas rarely entertained conspiracy theories. He wanted to solve problems, and there seemed little that a first-term congressman could do to curb such massive corporate power as Exxon wielded. But he found himself compelled to respond when he found evidence of oil companies' direct impact upon businesses in the Fifth District. The head of the Greater Lowell Gas Dealers Association complained, for example, that oil company sales representatives had asked dealers to "remain open seven days a week, to expand their hours of operation and reinstitute sales promotions." They also wanted dealers to lower pump prices, while oil companies raised wholesale prices. Dealers also complained of subtle threats to comply. According to Tsongas, "companies are pressuring dealers to sign new contracts with shortened notification of termination terms." Bob Stevens, owner of Bob's Shell Station in Lowell, complained that oil companies were pushing station owners to lower prices and sell more gas because of a sudden oversupply. Stevens claimed that, if he continued to lower prices, he would lose "what little profit" he was making.²⁵

Stevens's complaints were not unique. In 1974, Representative Paul Cronin had sponsored a bill to protect independent gas station owners from the canceling of leases by large oil companies. According to Cronin, the issue of companies assuming control of

²⁴ Lowell Sun, 22, 29 ("only," "exaggerated") December 1974; Tsongas Press Release, 25 February 1977, letter from NRC Chairman Marcus A Rowden to Morris Udall 20 July 1976, Box 123A, TC.

²⁵ Lowell Sun, 11 November 1974.

stations in this way and canceling services “has reached the point where it is no longer in the public interest to have the oil companies further intrude into the area of gasoline retailing.”

Tsongas believed that pushing oil companies to divest would have little effect.²⁶

In February, Tsongas met with Federal Energy Administration head Frank Zarb about the problem, to little effect. In March, Tsongas asked colleagues to sign a letter to President Ford asking for action against oil companies that were pressuring dealers. He urged an investigation by the FEA; forty-three representatives joined him by co-signing the letter. When the FEA failed to investigate the situation, Tsongas grew impatient. He began to scrutinize the FEA and found that one in ten of its employees had represented oil firms. He vowed to examine “whether the FEA failed to take vigorous action against illegal price increases and, if so, whether personnel with oil company backgrounds influenced these decisions. In the first week of May, Zarb finally cautioned fifteen major oil companies about “unseemly pressures to cause dealers to operate in ways that reduce their earnings.” Rather than declaring victory against the oil companies, however, he expressed disappointment that Zarb’s letter only dealt with financial considerations and “never mentions conservation.” The next month he asked for formal congressional hearings on the matter.²⁷

By the summer of 1975, Tsongas had formed a fairly comprehensive understanding of energy issues based on the premise that society had to consider carefully the type of world it left its children. In two speeches early that summer he proposed his solutions to the energy problems of the next generation. Essentially, he believed that conservation, combined with

²⁶ Lowell Sun, 13 July 1974; Mitch Tyson interview, 14 October 2003.

²⁷ Dear Colleagues letter, 13 March 1975 Box 126A, TC; Tsongas Press Release, 20 March, 23, 28 (“whether”) April, 5 May (“never”), 15 June 1975, Box 170A, TC; Frank Zarb letter to Z. D. Bonner, President of Gulf Oil 2 May 1975, Box 170A, TC.

a balanced mix of “transitional” energy sources, would buy society enough time to develop new sources of energy. His experiences in the Peace Corps informed his position on conservation; he believed that the rest of the world would come to resent the United States for its wasteful consumption of one-third of worldwide energy production. He believed in a mix of energy sources because he thought that reliance on too few was politically unfeasible and that environmental hazards had to be balanced with other costs and risks. His vision entailed support for research and development in solar, geothermal, and particularly fusion energy, policies that he pursued with increasing intensity for the next six years.²⁸

In April, Tsongas’s primary hope for Lowell’s economic future, the Lowell national park proposal, encountered a major setback. The idea for turning much of downtown Lowell into a national park had begun in 1970 when Patrick Mogan proposed it as the education component of Lowell’s Model Cities Program. Fifth District Representative F. Bradford Morse had introduced a bill to obtain funding for a Lowell National Park just before leaving for his post at the United Nations. The Fifth District’s next representative, Paul Cronin, reintroduced the bill in 1973, where it passed the House. In the process, however, the bill had shrunk, creating a Lowell Historical District Commission and allotting a mere \$150,000 to create a preservation plan. Cronin feared the bill’s chances in the Senate, however. Alan Bible, the chair of the Senate Interior Committee’s Subcommittee on Parks and Recreation, set the bill aside in the fall of 1974, calling the \$150,000 study far too expensive for such inflationary and austere times. Bible may have resented the

²⁸ “Energy Speech,” May 1975, and “Voke-Shawsheen Speech,” 2 June 1975 Box 170A, TC.

Massachusetts delegation's attempts to push through legislation on Martha's Vineyard and the Nantucket Islands earlier that session.²⁹

After the election Cronin had called on a friend of his that was on good terms with Bible, and asked him for help. By that point Bible had resigned his seat as committee chair to allow his successor seniority. Cronin's friend asked Bible if he objected to the bill, and was told that he did not. Then he asked if Bible would call Senator Henry Jackson (D-WA), chair of the Interior Committee, to tell him so. Jackson and Cronin then asked subcommittee members to waive customary legislative procedures and send the bill to the Senate floor without the traditional reports that would accompany it, a technically illegal procedure known as "pulling the subcommittee." Residents of Lowell, the bill's supporters, pestered Massachusetts Senator Edward Kennedy to bring the bill back up. Kennedy called Jackson, who then brought the request directly to the Senate floor. It passed, and President Ford signed the bill into law eight hours before the deadline for a pocket veto.³⁰

In mid-April of 1975, when the Lowell Historical Canal District Commission met in Lowell to begin its work, members learned that the Commission's funding no longer existed. The money for the study had fallen victim to jurisdictional disputes and President Ford's budget freeze. Tsongas scrambled to mediate the jurisdictional dispute between the Interior Department, which had direct responsibility for the project, and the General Services Administration (GSA), which would provide support services. To re-appropriate the funds Tsongas enlisted the support of some powerful Massachusetts allies, including Majority Leader O'Neill and Senator Edward Brooke. Brooke pushed for the full \$150,000

²⁹ Lowell Sun, 31 October 1976.

³⁰ Lowell Sun, 15 December 1974, 31 October 1976.

appropriation and House Chief Conferee Sidney Yates allowed the Senate position to pass. By December, the Commission chose a team of three consulting firms, David A. Crane and Partners, Celardin/Bruner/Cott, Inc., and Michael Sand and Associates to assemble the park plans. While the Commission worked in Lowell to put the study together, Tsongas and Faust worked in Washington. Throughout the rest of 1975 and into 1976, Fred Faust discussed the park proposal with anyone who would listen. He found a receptive ear in Gary Everhardt, the director of the Park Service, whom he believed wanted to “leave his own mark” on his agency, and viewed the urban park as “the most likely vehicle.” Faust discovered that Everhardt had begun to assemble a task force to “make recommendations about criteria for selecting and funding urban parks.” Tsongas also asked park consultants and committee members to brief congressional legislative aides about the project. Faust conducted a careful study of cities all over the country that had attempted to use historic preservation themes in their economic development efforts. Tsongas and Faust talked to representatives and aides, pulling together support for a park bill that Tsongas expected to introduce as his first item of business in the Ninety-Fifth Congress.³¹

In May 1975, Tsongas’s Job Resources Section (JRS) embarked on a series of meetings with nearly two hundred individuals representing more than one hundred companies, banks, cities and towns, unions, and other organizations. In fifty-four meetings, the JRS staff outlined the purpose of their office and asked for suggestions. They were greeted cordially—a clear sign that people were pleased about Tsongas’s concern for the economic

³¹ Lowell Sun, 15 December 1974, 31 October 1976; Job Resources Section Report, undated, Box 177c, TC; Tsongas letter to Leo Diehl, Office of the Majority Leader 23 April 1975; to Gary Everhardt 30 April 1975; to Donald LeMay, General Services Administration 30 April 1975, Box 167B, TC; Letter Sidney R. Yates, Chair of Interior Subcommittee of Appropriations Committee to Paul Tsongas 12 May 1975, Box 167B, TC; Donald P. Young, Acting Assistant Director of General Services Administration, letter to Tsongas 27 May 1975; Tsongas letter to Stewart Udall 29 October 1975, Box 167B, TC; Memorandum Fred Faust to Paul Tsongas, undated (“leave,” most,” “make”), Box 167B, TC.

health of the district. And the JRS took extensive notes about a bewildering variety of economic concerns. Although most constituent suggestions proved unworkable, one new idea changed the face of Lowell. When the JRS staff brought up the idea of a redevelopment fund at meetings with banks and city representatives, one participant, Edward London, suggested a non-profit corporation in which banks and the city would underwrite redevelopment loans that harmonized with the proposed urban park. Lowell banker George Duncan refined London's plan, suggesting the banks create a pooled fund based upon loans outstanding. Duncan offered his help drafting the enabling legislation, and Tsongas happily assented. The JRS staff approached Tsongas with the idea. Later that month, Tsongas called a meeting of Lowell bankers and asked for their participation. When they asked why they should put their money into such a project he told them that they stood to gain more than anyone else by such development, since they owned, through foreclosures, much of the property in the area. When they agreed to his proposal, Tsongas worked with Duncan and state legislators to pass a bill enabling the Lowell Development Financial Corporation (LDFC). The creation of the LDFC may well have been the turning point for the economy of Greater Lowell.³²

Throughout the summer of 1975, Tsongas's interests in energy issues continued to shift toward lessening the regional impact of the oil crisis and promoting conservation and alternative energy sources. He opposed the oil import tariff, urged auto manufacturers to increase fuel efficiency standards, and drafted an amendment to require fuel-efficient

³² Report on Job Resources Symposium May 5 – May 13, Box 177C, TC; Ross J. Gittel, Renewing Cities (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992), 78-83. According to Gittel, the LDFC was envisioned as a counter to the oil refinery proposal. Gittel also suggests that Tsongas threatened, as a member of the Banking Committee, not to listen to their concerns. It seems unlikely that Tsongas needed an active counter to the refinery idea by the time the LDFC was conceived. It also seems unlikely that he would threaten not to hear their concerns. Tsongas was deeply critical of the Greater Lowell banking community, but actively engaged in attempting to understand, and overcome, their reluctance to invest in the city.

government vehicles. He also began actively to criticize the Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA) for “misplaced priorities,” charging that they were spending too much time promoting nuclear power. He criticized them as well for inaction on proposals sent by Fifth District firms for energy research. Finally, in late June, he achieved some success with alternative energy sources. In April, he had called Mitre Corporation in Bedford, Massachusetts for help in drafting a bill. With Mitre’s advice, and in consultation with the National Science Foundation, he attached an amendment to the ERDA appropriations bill to increase funding for solar research by \$51.8 million. If the amendment made it through the Senate it would increase funding for solar research to \$194.8 million, equaling the expenditure for nuclear research. The Senate later increased funding by a lesser but still substantial amount.³³

Although Tsongas had worked to increase funding for solar research, he had not yet considered attempting to direct that funding to the Fifth District. When the appropriation passed, ERDA began to work more actively towards reorganizing energy research. The first step for solar research was the creation of a Solar Energy Research Institute (SERI). The legislation that created ERDA had also ordered the new agency to create SERI. Section Ten of the Solar Energy Research, Development, and Demonstration Act of 1974 indicated that the institute should conduct solar energy research but provided little direction as to size, structure, location, or other details. In June 1975, ERDA officials announced that they would be seeking site bids for the new institute, which they expected would begin operating

³³ Lowell Sun, 5 May 1975; Press release 28 May, 6 (“misplaced”) June 1975, Box 123A, TC.

by January. The next month, the New England Congressional Caucus began to lobby ERDA to locate the institute somewhere in New England.³⁴

New England desperately needed Tsongas's organizational talents. Competition for the facility was considerable. Scientists in New Mexico, which had ample sunlight to study, organized a consortium led and backed by the top political leadership in the state and consisting of researchers from Sandia Laboratories, Los Alamos Scientific Laboratories, the University of New Mexico, and the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology. The consortium submitted a full formal proposal well before any of the other states—well before ERDA officials had decided how to structure an RFP. Colorado had also been very busy, especially when Senator Gary Hart gave SERI his number two priority, right after investigations into hundreds of cattle mutilations plaguing the state. The state of Florida had put together another consortium with a full-time staff of four. New England's hopefuls believed Arizona was the most serious threat. Arizona had established a Solar Energy Research Commission with five full-time lobbyists. Many believed that Arizona's advantage lay in President Ford's courting of Arizona's two Republican Senators, Barry Goldwater and John J. Rhodes, whose backing Ford would need if challenged from the right in 1976. But Arizona's congressional delegation took no chances and actively promoted their state, providing every member of the House and Senate with a copy of the August 1975 issue of Arizona Highways—almost solely devoted to solar energy research in Arizona. Twenty-five states eventually entered the competition. The heavy competition for SERI came more from perceptions about the country's energy situation than its perceived short-term economic benefits. The facility could be expected to provide a direct economic stimulus of \$50 million

³⁴ Energy Research and Development Administration, Division of Solar Energy, "Definition Report" June 1975; Dear Colleagues Letter, 17 June 1975; John E. Mock to Edward P. Boland, July 31, 1975 Box 178C, TC.

to an area, plus about 1,500 jobs. Many believed that the industries surrounding SERI would grow like wildfire as the U.S. ran out of energy in the coming decades. Catching the wave would create an energy boomtown just as surely as finding a “gusher.” Tsongas searched for just such a rapidly growing, federally funded, industrial sector to bolster the economy of the southern part of the district.³⁵

In September, private industry in Massachusetts began to take an active interest in SERI. Some New England firms, like Arthur D. Little Company and Cabot Corporation, had argued that the real roadblock to solar viability was cost-effective manufacturing and that industry, rather than academia, should take the lead. Consequently, the New England Council for Economic Development committed a staffer to the project full-time and spent \$10,000 attempting to identify experts and other resources. On September 11, Steven R. Rivkin spearheaded the council’s efforts and suggested the formation of a task force. The council then brought in academic experts to discuss SERI. The experts voiced skepticism about the prospect, but council members chose to believe that psychological factors would be very important and that the region’s adaptable manufacturing capabilities could quickly put new techniques into production. They also cited the academic research capabilities of the area.³⁶

Patrick D’Addario showed Tsongas the Boston Globe’s coverage of the council’s meeting the day after the council met to discuss SERI. Tsongas noted that photovoltaic cells had been developed by Bell Labs, which had facilities in the Fifth District. Just east of the

³⁵ Arizona Highways, August 1975.

³⁶ Memorandum, Steven R. Rivkin, Coordinator, Solar Energy Project to The Executive Committee, New England Council, 11 September 1975; Memorandum Dennis Coffey, Lowell City Development Authority to Vincent Pytlinski, 18 September 1975, Box 178c4, TC.

district, in Woburn, Exxon Subsidiary Solar Power Corporation manufactured photovoltaic cells for use on oil-derricks, the cells' first commercial application. To Tsongas, the SERI effort seemed a great opportunity. It would help to spur the development of solar power, and could bring high-tech jobs to Massachusetts as well. He asked his Job Resources Section to support the effort. D'Addario called Senator Kennedy's office to schedule a meeting to discuss the matter. Together, Kennedy and Tsongas drafted a joint statement in a couple of days, calling for a meeting to coordinate quickly the effort before the issuance of proposal guidelines, probably in October. They believed that New England's advantage lay in commercialization, since the region's lack of energy resources created a powerful incentive to implement future advances in solar technology. But only a coordinated effort on the part of a unified New England had any chance of success. The region had many natural advantages, but the effort would have to raise a great deal of money to compete. Some states had already devoted as much as three million dollars to finance efforts to design a successful bid on SERI.³⁷

Tsongas and his allies would also have to challenge the fairness of the process. On August 15, at an energy symposium in Vail, Colorado, President Ford had told conferees, "I was talking to Bob Seamans a few days ago, and they have made significant progress. There is, unfortunately, competition developing between Arizona, New Mexico, and Florida." Some listeners misinterpreted his remarks, and Senators Kennedy and Brooke wrote a joint letter to Seamans requesting "assurance that neither the Administrator nor the President has reached even the most preliminary decision on possible sites." The President had meant to note that the competition had become intense, and that other states offered strong

³⁷ Patrick D'Addario interview, 24 September 2003; John Perlin. From Space to Earth: The Story of Solar Electricity (Ann Arbor: Aatec Publications, 1999).

competition for the Colorado researchers to whom he was speaking at the time. Kennedy and Tsongas worried about favoritism in the awards process. So they pledged to scrutinize carefully the entire process, while New England pursued its proposal, and to push for congressional oversight. They asked the members of the New England Congressional Caucus to pledge staff time to the effort and other resources like research. Together, Tsongas and Kennedy urged the formation of a “New England Energy Task Force” to assemble talent and put together a viable proposal. They asked Edward King, president-elect of the New England Council, to consult with representatives of the six New England states and coordinate the formation of the task force by October 15, report to the delegation the following week, and prepare to attend a meeting with the New England Congressional Delegation and Robert Seamans on October 22. Tsongas and Kennedy also asked the council to work with the New England Congressional Caucus in establishing a “blue-ribbon energy action group” to facilitate the flow of federal dollars from ERDA to New England, especially regarding the bid for SERI. Then they worked with the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) to put together an energy workshop to establish a “working relationship between Massachusetts technical personnel and ERDA officials.” In the process, they assembled a mailing list of businesses and researchers engaged in solar studies and development and kept them abreast of developments. Harold Rosenbaum, a congressional fellow in Tsongas’s office, coordinated the workshop, held at Tufts University on October 7. To participants at the meeting, the effort boiled down to “getting ERDA money into New England.” They did not have any immediate idea about how to accomplish

that goal. Rosenbaum suggested that the panel continue to clarify that point, and headed back to Washington.³⁸

Tsongas put Patrick D'Addario to work on helping to fund New England's bid partially because SERI was an employment issue involving jobs in the district. D'Addario had been effective in raising money during the 1974 campaign. Tsongas also asked congressional intern Joseph Levangie to prepare a guide to help Massachusetts firms and universities to obtain other types of funding from ERDA. On October 15, Tsongas unveiled the plan before members of AIAA in Lexington. His four-point program, "aimed at helping area concerns tap the multi-billion dollar federal energy budget," included the SERI proposal, conferences and workshops, an ERDA guidebook, and an ERDA district office for Massachusetts. Tsongas's Washington office became a hive of activity devoted to energy issues. In October, he met with the New England congressional delegation and Robert Seamans, the ERDA administrator. Seamans seemed receptive to the idea of a New England Regional Office.³⁹

The Committee on Science and Technology's Subcommittee on Energy Research, Development and Demonstration held hearings on October 22 to brief legislators on the progress of the delayed SERI proposal specifications. Faced with keen interest in SERI, but also saddled with delays in its budget appropriation through most of the summer, ERDA

³⁸ Solar Research Sparks a Pork-Barrel Scramble," The Independent Bulletin of Science Policy 1 October 1975 ("I, assurance"); Philip M. Boffey "Solar Research Sweepstakes: States Vie for a Place in the Sun," Science (10 October 1975): 128-130; Paul Tsongas and Senator Edward Kennedy "Joint Statement at meeting of New England Congressional Caucus," 23 September 1975 Box 170A; Paul E. Tsongas, "Proposal for New England Action Plan," 23 September 1975; Tsongas to Solar Control Products Corporation 3 October 1975, Box 178C, TC; Raymond B. Janney, II "Minutes to New England Energy Workshop Planning Meeting," 7 October 1975, Box 178C, TC.

³⁹ Harold Rosenbaum to W. X. Johnson, 27 August 1975; Paul Tsongas "Energy, New England and ERDA" 3 October 1975 ("aimed") Box 178C, TC.

had asked Mitre Corporation, of Bedford, Massachusetts to begin thinking about how to structure such an institute. Mitre surveyed solar industry executives—whose customer base consisted almost entirely of oil companies. Mitre’s study, presented by Dr. Norman Wak, concluded that SERI “should be stimulative rather than competitive . . . unique rather than duplicative,” and “objective in its roles rather than an advocate for particular approaches.” Executives worried about SERI competing with existing businesses for resources or people. They were probably also concerned about how their customers, the oil companies, would view any competition from a new energy industry. Solar executives wanted SERI to act as a planning agency, charting the overall direction of solar commercialization efforts. They wanted SERI to broker competing interests, to set industry standards and to fill gaps in research and development too risky for private developers to underwrite. They also wanted SERI as a central repository for data from the research and development process. The scientists and industry executives deemed location unimportant, except to ensure convenient access to transportation corridors. To Tsongas, however, location remained very important. Not only could locating the institute in New England create jobs and spin-off contracts, but the region needed alternative sources of energy. It also excelled in commercialization. For Tsongas, Mitre’s survey had missed the crucial insight driving the New England Council’s efforts: commercialization remained solar energy development’s bottleneck.⁴⁰

At the urging of Tsongas and Kennedy, the New England governors voted in early November to work collaboratively as a region and chose members for the Energy Action Group. Tsongas and others expected that they would vie with more than 100 other

⁴⁰ Remarks of Norman Wak, Hearings on Solar Energy Research Institute, Committee on Science and Technology, Subcommittee on Energy Research, Development and Demonstration, 22 October 1975; J.P. Silvers, memorandum regarding meeting with Ted Mock, Harold Rosenbaum, and Patrick D’Addario. 28 October 1975, Box 178C, TC; Patrick D’Addario interview, 24 September 2003.

proposals for SERI. Throughout the fall of 1975, Tsongas and his staff met with ERDA officials and in November proposed a joint ERDA/New England technical workshop to acquaint technical people with their ERDA counterparts and to provide them with a forum for constructive criticism regarding proposals under consideration. Tsongas asked ERDA to underwrite most of the costs of such a workshop. Although New England had actively raised money to compete, the Energy Action Group estimated that the entire proposal process would eventually cost from \$100,000 to \$200,000.⁴¹

Although supposedly regional in nature, with state delegations teaming up for the good of the New England effort, participants already began to suspect that Massachusetts participants, particularly Edward King, were dominating the effort and steering the proposal towards the Boston area, sometimes by emphasizing the importance of an “airport with international service,” which singled out Boston as the only viable choice. By the third meeting they had still not decided who would coordinate the effort, how to choose a site, who would fund it, or how it would be managed, but all of the major participants—the New England Regional Commission, the Council, the Governors, and the Caucus—were strongly represented. Among the New England congressional delegation only Tsongas and Kennedy sent representatives. By the beginning of 1976, the efforts of the team had paid off, in the publication of Levangie’s 247-page report Energy, ERDA, and the Fifth District. Tsongas mailed the guide to hundreds of high-tech firms in the district, many of whom thought it tremendously helpful. ERDA’s proposal guidelines did not come out until March, partially because Dr. John Teem, ERDA’s SERI project administrator, resigned in February.

⁴¹ Tsongas Press Release, 6 November 1975; Minutes of Meeting with ERDA 10 November 1975; Michael Lotker, “Minutes of The New England Energy Research and Development Task Force Meeting,” 14 November 1975, Box 178C, TC; New York Times, 9 November 1975.

Tsongas pronounced the guidelines “unbiased” and asked New England officials to work together to put together the best possible proposal by July 15, the proposal deadline. The proposal, however, ultimately ruled out the Fifth District entirely as a location, since the guidelines required 300 acres of open space, which they found in Westborough, Massachusetts. Regardless, Tsongas commended the proposal team and declared that their bid “should be among the top three.” Although the facility could not be in his district, the SERI effort had already yielded connections with district contractors, which Tsongas solidified through publication of Energy, ERDA, and the Fifth District. SERI competitors across the country spent far more than the \$50 million prize that the facility represented. But Tsongas’s efforts created political goodwill and connections in excess of his effort.⁴²

Because of the stiff competition for SERI, ERDA decided to delay announcing the winner until after the 1976 election. Tsongas looked forward to the November 15 announcement of the site. He had capitalized effectively on the effort by familiarizing Fifth-District companies with ERDA. He expected that even if New England did not win, the region might get a local ERDA office to facilitate future research and development contracts. He reminded ERDA’s administrator about the need for such a facility and received an encouraging reply. Companies in the Fifth District became much more aware of the efforts of their representative, too. Probably even more important to Tsongas, funding for solar research had doubled since ERDA began operations, partially through his efforts. It was expected to increase by 50 percent again before SERI opened its doors in January

⁴² Michael Lotker, “Minutes of The New England Energy Research and Development Task Force Meeting,” 9 December 1975, Box 178C, TC; New York Times, 9 November 1975.

1977. And presidential candidate Jimmy Carter made it clear that he hoped to increase funding yet again.⁴³

Tsongas continued to accumulate accomplishments, just as his thoughts, and those of his possible opponents, began to turn to the 1976 election. Lowell Sun editor Clement Costello began to foment opposition in March, making it clear that anyone who challenged Tsongas from the political right would have his full support. “We have, today, in Congressman Paul Tsongas,” Costello wrote, “the most liberal representative in the most liberal state delegation in Congress.” Tsongas’s voting record had earned him 100 percent ratings from Americans for Democratic Action, the AFL-CIO’s Committee for Political Action (COPE), and the League of Conservation Voters. Two conservative organizations gave him zero-percent ratings, mainly due to his opposition to oil price decontrol and the Hawk missile program. But Tsongas’s liberal voting record, at least when combined with his collaboration with large high-technology companies, pleased voters in the southern part of the district. And the northern industrial towns could point to his support for their concerns as well.⁴⁴

Early in March of 1976, the Lowell Historic Canal District Commission announced its choice of consultants to prepare the park plan, as well as several public hearings in the city to encourage citizen involvement in planning. The commission and its consultants presented the background of the park proposal, reviewed their goals and objectives, and solicited ideas and concepts. The announcement and the hearings served as powerful support for

⁴³ Tsongas press releases, 10 February, 15 March, 2 July, 16 July, 2 August; Liverman to Tsongas, 1 August 1976, Box 123A, TC; ERDA, “Fact Sheet: Solar Energy Research Institute (SERI)” 1976. Box 178C, TC; New York Times, 9 November 1975.

⁴⁴ Lowell Sun, 4 March 1976.

Tsongas's reelection campaign. But Tsongas waited until the middle of June for the emergence of an opponent. When Lowell Republican Roger Durkin finally declared his candidacy, he had already decided to attack Tsongas for his voting record. "The time is right," Durkin declared, "for someone who is moderately conservative to stop the spread of this social and philosophical garbage." Tsongas faced no opposition in the Democratic primary, and presidential candidate Jimmy Carter campaigned for him on a swing through Massachusetts, claiming that the state looked like a wonderful spot for a solar energy research institute.⁴⁵

Tsongas simply ignored Durkin's campaign entirely until two weeks before the election. Partially, that strategy came from the impression that Tsongas's campaign had made significant inroads into Cronin's support in 1974 only when Cronin began to defend himself against repeated demands for disclosure and debate. But with two weeks left until the 1976 election, Tsongas began to worry that aides and volunteers did not view Durkin as a significant enough threat. Tsongas did not want merely to squeak by such a weak candidate. Durkin had only managed to raise one-quarter the amount of money that Tsongas had. And Durkin's efforts at getting his name in front of the public did him as much harm as good. His unfavorable rating increased at the same rate as his name recognition.⁴⁶

Tsongas's opponent contended with the increasing visibility and momentum of the park proposal, too. Two weeks before the election, historians held a conference at the University of Lowell entitled "Historic Lowell: The City as Classroom." Brown University

⁴⁵ Thomas P. O'Neill III, Lieutenant Governor, Chairman Lowell Historic Canal District Commission, Press Release, 1 March 1976, Box 123A, TC; Lowell Sun, 8 June 1976 ("for").

⁴⁶ Lowell Sun, 15 October 1976.

historian Pat Malone kicked off the conference with an examination of the historic Northern Canal Project. Malone urged attendees to use the canals for hydroelectric power, as they were originally intended, saying that the river could provide “10 to 12 megawatts of power within the city and that’s nothing to spit at.” The next week, Lowell’s newspaper overflowed with articles about the proposed park. Coverage included designs and maps from the Lowell Team, interviews with prominent park proponents like Patrick Mogan and Thomas P. O’Neill, recapitulations of Lowell’s unique history and development, summaries of the various exhibits and points of interest within the park, articles touting the economic impact of the tourism that the park would bring, and a complete list of all of Lowell’s 500-some historic buildings. Sun articles extolled the virtues of federal-state-local governmental cooperation and planning. State Planning Director Frank Keefe, who earlier headed Lowell’s planning, remarked, “The extremely nice feature is you can get the feds and state and local governments recognizing the commonality of their interests and concerns and moving in the direction of consensus.” Most were very optimistic about the \$36 million park bill’s chances in the legislature. After all, the Democratic party expected to sweep the elections once again and bring in a Democratic president. The Speaker of the House would be from Massachusetts, and he liked the Fifth District’s congressman. The speaker’s son headed the commission putting together the park study that would recommend the funding to the Park Service. The city and local businesses supported the proposal. “The direct effect of any \$36 million investment by the federal government will be jobs—and additional investment by both the public and private sectors,” concluded one reporter after discussing the park proposal with Thomas P. O’Neill III.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Lowell Sun, 16 (“megawatts”) 31 (“extremely,” “direct”) October 1976.

But the Lowell Historic Canal District Commission delayed the release of the final park planning report until November 29 and asked the team to write the final commission report by January. By the election Tsongas was nevertheless guardedly optimistic about the park bill's chances in the next Congress. Tsongas expected John Sieberling (Ohio) to become chair of the House Interior Committee's parks subcommittee and spent time discussing the park with him. He also lined up Henry Reuss and Morris Udall to co-sponsor the bill with the Massachusetts delegation.⁴⁸

In the first Tsongas/Durkin debate on October 17, broadcast by three radio stations, Durkin attacked Tsongas's ideology. After Tsongas blamed some of the Northeast's economic woes on Nixon-Ford policies, Durkin shot back that Tsongas held "an economic view of the world similar to that of an ant," and Durkin blamed the Northeast's economic problems on government spending and regulation. Thinking about SERI, Tsongas mildly noted his belief that government could play an important role in stimulating investment. He believed that the real question was not how much money the government spent but where it spent it and decried the "huge waste" of defense spending. Durkin saw an opportunity and slammed Tsongas for voting against the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) program, which he believed constituted a "major" part of Hanscom Air Force Base's operations. Tsongas blandly informed him that 94 percent of the AWACS budget went to Seattle's Boeing Company, and that Hanscom only saw about 1.5 percent of the money. Tsongas knew this statistic, having actively worked with Hanscom officials for more than a year already.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Lowell Sun, 31 October 1976, 3 November 1976.

⁴⁹ Lowell Sun, 18 ("economic," "huge"), 20 October 1976.

Lowell Sun editor Costello tried to chip away at Tsongas's support. Under a cartoon showing Tsongas leading a march with a banner labeled "Socialism" Costello urged readers to vote for Durkin. He hoped that a strong showing for Durkin would "pull [Tsongas] back towards the center just a bit more than a strong endorsement would do." According to Costello, none of the Democrats up for reelection in Massachusetts could "give the people anything that the people can't give themselves if left to their own devices with a few more bucks in their pockets to work out their own salvation." The editor again attacked Tsongas's liberal voting record. But Tsongas knew that his voting record told only part of his story. His work on behalf of the park supporters helped him with constituents in Greater Lowell more than did his voting stance. His intense involvement with federal contractors and high-tech companies in the southern part of the district ensured their active support, too. For the 1976 campaign Tsongas again hired a professional fundraiser in part because he and Patrick D'Addario felt uncomfortable calling companies that the Job Resources Section had helped, although their financial support would have been easy to get. Votes were important, however, so Tsongas always made a point of contacting Fifth District defense contractors like Raytheon to ensure that whenever possible he did not vote against appropriations that would adversely affect these companies or their employees.⁵⁰

Tsongas ran on his accomplishments: saving the park study funds, protecting Avco's desalinization and coal conversion programs, passing legislation that allowed Malden Mills to expand, creating the Lowell Development Bank, convincing the Defense Department not to relocate the Cambridge Research Lab and not to cut staff at Mitre Corporation and Lincoln Labs. For the future, he cited his hopes for the Urban Park, the Midwest-Northeast

⁵⁰ Lowell Sun, 26 October 1976 ("pull," "give"); Patrick D'Addario interview, 24 September 2003, Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003.

Economic Advancement Coalition, and a national energy policy. Durkin's positions, in contrast, were ideological and often inconsistent. Although he favored federal incentives for business expansion, Durkin claimed that he held a "businessman's view" of economics, not Tsongas's "governmental" view. But he favored "incentives for business expansion." And he alienated the more cosmopolitan southern part of the district by opposing the Equal Rights Amendment (once at a League of Women Voters forum in Lexington) and supporting conservative causes.⁵¹

The week before the election Tsongas had outspent Durkin three-to-one and had twelve times as much money left to finish the campaign. Durkin walked around the district charging that "the tide has turned" and handing out leaflet advertisements reading "Roger Durkin is Winning!" A reporter from the Sun noted that Durkin "appears to be the only one who knows," adding that most voters did not recognize Durkin's name. One day, while Durkin traveled around the district in his Lincoln Continental a policeman noticed his monogrammed shirt cuffs, asking why Durkin's mother had to sew his name on his shirt. The answer by then was obvious even to Durkin, who remarked, "It helps remind me who I am."⁵²

On Halloween, just before the election, Wang Laboratories opened its Lowell Complex, expected to become the company's worldwide headquarters. Governor Michael Dukakis, Tsongas, and Roger Durkin all appeared at the open house. Wang had purchased the building from Mostek for \$1.5 million, and spent \$750,000, partially in loans from the Lowell Development Corporation on renovations. The site offered more space than the

⁵¹ Lowell Sun, 28, 29 October 1976.

⁵² Lowell Sun, 28, 29 ("tide," "winning," "appears," "helps") October, 1 November 1976.

other alternatives, enough for an expected 500 employees collecting an estimated \$10 million annual payroll. In the final debate of the campaign the following day, Durkin once again accused Tsongas of believing that federal spending would solve all economic problems. Tsongas noted his creation of the Lowell Development Corporation, saying, “We’re into private capital as well.”⁵³

Tsongas decided not to bother running previously planned television ads. Richard Arenberg had told him to expect 66 percent of the vote. Newspapers agreed with Arenberg’s assessment. Tsongas won in every city of the Fifth District. He won the southern towns by a sizable margin, despite the fact that they all delivered more votes to President Ford than his challenger Jimmy Carter. After Tsongas received 67.6 percent of the vote, Durkin told his supporters, “We find ourselves opposed to the Socialist philosophy that has swept the country but evidently that’s what people want.” About the Fifth District he grumbled, “A Republican can’t run and win unless he runs as Santa Claus and the Tooth Fairy.” To Durkin, the election proved that “the majority favored welfareism.” After congratulating his victorious opponent, Durkin added that he still disagreed “vehemently with [Tsongas’s] philosophy . . . of failure,” his “gospel of envy,” his “creed of ignorance,” which had as its sole virtue the “mutual sharing of misery.”⁵⁴

Tsongas had no “philosophy” in the sense that Durkin understood the term. He had goals, objectives, plans, skills, talents, luck, and an increasingly broad base of political support based upon his accomplishments. After the election, the Lowell Historic Canal District Commission released its final report and recommendations. Throughout the year

⁵³ Lowell Sun, 31 October 1976, 1 November (“we’re”) 1976.

⁵⁴ Lowell Sun, 31 October 1976, 3 November 1976 (qtns.).

the park planning team had struggled to connect all of the geographically scattered buildings and historical sites the plan needed to include. The commission's report, nicknamed the Brown Book, fixed upon Lowell's canals as the center of the park plan, the glue that held the proposal together. As a city councilor Tsongas had on one occasion proposed filling in the canals. But now the city's ancient source of energy, its *raison d'etre*, became a "kind of necklace" that surrounded the mills and other buildings and tied them together. Even the Fifth District's most unlikely economic development project, the urban park concept, pointed to the need for sound energy policy. Perhaps the canals might once again provide power. At least an urban park might provide recreation to the region and decrease the need to travel to distant parks, saving gasoline. With his feet firmly planted in his native Lowell, Tsongas increasingly based his legislative agenda upon energy and attendant economic and environmental issues.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Lowell Sun, 3 November 1976; George M. O'Har, "The Park and the City: Lowell National Historical Park and the Rebirth of Lowell," unpublished manuscript, 1999, Lowell National Historical Park Library, ("necklace"), 43.

CHAPTER THREE

BALANCING ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT, AND REGIONAL INTERESTS

On December 6, 1976, the House Democratic Caucus met in Washington to choose the new party leadership. It quickly elected the unopposed Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr., of Massachusetts, to the position of Speaker, and began the more contentious process of choosing the new majority leader. Four prominent Democrats vied for the position: Jim Wright, of Texas; Phil Burton, of California; Richard Bolling, of Missouri; and John J. McFall, of California. Observers packed the gallery for the caucus's first-ever open session and awaited the results of its secret ballot. Many representatives crumpled their votes—cribbed on little yellow slips of paper held close to a chest or covered by a suit coat—before stuffing them into the ballot boxes placed in the well of the House chamber. The Caucus had adopted a low-man-out rule and the first vote, counted in an adjacent anteroom, ousted McFall from the competition. Burton tallied the most votes, followed by Bolling and Wright. Representative Burton led the field by twenty-five votes and launched a tactic that he hoped would vault him into leadership. Fearing his chances against Bolling in the final ballot, Burton instructed several of his supporters to vote for Wright. With the added support, Wright edged Bolling out of the contest by two votes in the second ballot. As the third and final contest began, Burton approached several representatives drawing near the well. To Massachusetts Representative Paul Tsongas he said, "I know you were a big Bolling supporter . . . I just hope you can be with me on this one." Tsongas had spent much of the day attempting to convince new Democrats to support Bolling, a liberal reformer partly responsible for many recent innovations, including the new power of the caucus to determine party leadership. With his candidate now out of the running, Tsongas opened his

hand to Burton enough to reveal the name—Burton’s—printed on the yellow scrap. He then slipped the paper into the wooden box. Representatives who had previously waited on the House floor swarmed the anteroom to watch the count. A rumor—quickly spread then carefully substantiated—named Wright the winner. Representatives mobbed Wright, slapping him on the back and tousling his hair. Burton delivered a gracious concession speech through a forced half-smile. Afterward, he rode the elevator down, bitter about his one-vote loss to Wright, which some attributed to a reputation for backroom dealing “bordering on deviousness.”¹

Tsongas’s candor with Burton might well have helped the Urban Park proposal gain subcommittee approval, since Burton became chair of that committee a few weeks after the leadership battle. Certainly Tsongas’s openness and honesty helped him to gain more influence in energy policy during his second congressional term. Tsongas worked hard to shepherd the legislation for the Lowell National Historical Park through Congress and strove to bring rationality to U.S. energy policy. When the deeply flawed, secretly crafted energy plan of the Jimmy Carter administration disintegrated under the centrifugal forces of regional and corporate interests, Tsongas shifted gears. Increasingly, he worked to ameliorate energy production’s adverse impacts upon the environment. And he began to work towards a separate energy policy for New England. Tsongas achieved incremental, measurable successes in these areas. Tsongas longed to participate in foreign policy and jumped at the opportunity to journey to Africa on a congressional fact-finding mission. In 1978, intensely ambitious, Tsongas risked his House seat to run for the U.S. Senate, in hope of playing a larger role in foreign policy. Once again, Tsongas’s victory in the primary and

¹ New York Times, 7 December 1976 (“bordering”); Transcript of Mehmed Ali interview of Richard Arenberg (“I know”), 23 May 2003, University of Massachusetts Lowell Center for Lowell History (hereafter CLH).

the general election were substantially aided by questions about the credibility of his opponents.

After voting to determine the Democratic party leadership, Tsongas resumed his energy policy work. House Interior Committee chair Morris Udall from Arizona had invited him and other members of the Subcommittee on Energy and Environment to tour nuclear facilities to examine their safety. Accompanying them were representatives Teno Roncalio (D-WY) and James Weaver (D-OR), as well as a few congressional aides. The first week of January, the group examined a nuclear fuel reprocessing plant in Barnwell, South Carolina, which recycled “spent” nuclear fuel for re-use. After the Barnwell facility, they toured another reprocessing facility, owned by General Electric, in Morris, Illinois, and several light water reactors in the Chicago area. The group then continued to Idaho Falls, Idaho, to tour the Idaho Nuclear Engineering Laboratory. Tsongas had long been interested in nuclear safety issues, and had participated in hearings about nuclear plant precautions against sabotage. He worked in his first term to abolish the Joint Atomic Energy Committee in the House, and move its oversight powers to another committee. He worried about small bands of saboteurs attacking reprocessing facilities or individuals stealing smaller amounts systematically while employed at nuclear facilities. Most of his colleagues in the New England Congressional Caucus were more than skeptical, opposing nuclear power outright. Tsongas, because he had come to believe that nuclear fuel would remain a part of the U.S. energy mix, didn’t feel compelled to oppose nuclear power outright. The previous year, during hearings on nuclear power plant safety, he rejected calls for a moratorium on nuclear power plant construction. Yet, he opposed greatly increased funding for nuclear research. He believed that the research and development dollars that the Energy Research and

Development Administration (ERDA) spent on nuclear power could be much better used for solar or conservation research. But with one-fifth of New England's electricity already coming from nuclear power, Tsongas did not think that abolishing such power was possible.²

Jimmy Carter, the incoming president, appeared to share Tsongas's interest in energy policy. On inauguration day, which was marked by natural gas shortages and cold weather that had closed schools as far south as Plains, Georgia, Carter pledged to send a comprehensive energy plan to Congress within ninety days. His interest in energy policy surprised Washington insiders and the American public. It pleased Tsongas, especially when the new president appeared to share some of Tsongas's beliefs as to the best directions for energy policy. Carter had pledged during his campaign to dismantle the Clinch River Breeder Reactor project, which Tsongas believed posed not only considerable proliferation risks but drained research and development funds better spent on alternative energy research. And Carter's incoming team gave every indication of taking energy conservation seriously. James Schlesinger, who became Carter's chief energy advisor, advocated strong conservation measures. Carter also seemed to react quickly and decisively. Many parts of the country suffered under severe natural gas shortages during the winter of 1977-1978, and federal disaster relief regulations did not count energy shortages as disasters, since they caused little property damage. The new administration struggled at first with this new type of emergency with surprising candor. Press Secretary Jody Powell claimed, "Frankly, we don't know at this point just what needs to be done." But emergency natural gas legislation initiated by Carter quickly passed both houses of Congress during the first few weeks of the

² Lawrence Eagle Tribune, 6 January; Lowell Sun, 2 February, 7 May 1977; Powerlines, 21 ("It is clear") July 1977.

session. Carter's quick response and subsequent congressional approval of the president's remedy seemed to Tsongas to promise a bright future for energy legislation. Moreover, Carter's fireside address in early February seemed to indicate the administration's interest in conservation as well as a commitment to resolving long-term energy issues that Gerald Ford had found insoluble.³

Both Carter and Tsongas knew that they had to keep the issue of energy in front of the public. On St. Valentine's Day, 1977, Tsongas celebrated his thirty-fourth birthday in Dracut, Massachusetts, and he was already raising money for his next congressional campaign. To balance the pain of fundraising, his least favorite activity, he delivered a "serious address on energy" to attendees, which included the mayors of Lawrence and Lowell, and the new House Majority Leader Jim Wright of Texas. His speech emphasized conservation and alternative energy sources and lauded the new president's interest in energy issues: "The President's straightforward confrontation of the energy problem reflects an encouraging realization that the future of the nation, indeed the world, depends upon vigorous energy conservation and the immediate development of alternate energy sources." Tsongas also wished that Carter's top energy advisor James Schlesinger might find a way to impose compulsory conservation regulations, including "tougher efficiency guidelines for industry, home appliances and automobiles."⁴

³ Washington Post, 29 January 1977 ("Frankly"); Haynes Johnson, In the Absence of Power (New York: The Viking Press, 1980); John C. Barrow, "An Age of Limits: Jimmy Carter and the Quest for a National Energy Policy," in Gary M. Fink and Hugh Davis Graham, eds., The Carter Presidency: Policy Choices in the Post-New Deal Era (Lawrence: The University of Kansas Press, 1998), 160-164.

⁴ New York Times, 31 January, 3 February 1977; Tsongas press release 10 July 1977 ("a serious"); Tsongas speech "The Energy Crunch: No Future without Conservation" 16 February 1977, Box 164C, Tsongas Collection, University of Massachusetts Lowell Center for Lowell History (TC, hereafter).

During the spring of 1977, while waiting for Carter to unveil his National Energy Plan (NEP), Tsongas also anticipated the final outcome of a battle to bring ERDA's Solar Energy Research Institute to New England. The team that had prepared the proposal had continued all through the fall of 1976 to raise money and continued to call upon Tsongas to coordinate the effort in Washington. Just before the 1976 elections, ERDA postponed the award announcement date past November 16, claiming that the committee wanted to visit nineteen of the twenty original bidders. Tsongas and the others continued to hear positive rumors about their proposal's reception. New England had submitted the only proposal involving more than one state, and they believed that ERDA was impressed with the cooperative effort required to create a unified proposal. They had also heard that ERDA appreciated the enthusiasm and intense interest that New England had expressed. Lawrence Levy, who eventually directed the New England effort, believed that its bid was the only opportunity the region would have for ERDA money, since most funds traditionally went for nuclear research and since New England had no other fuels that could be expected to give them a similar research advantage. Levy formed a non-profit corporation, unimaginatively named it "Solar Energy Research Institute," and sent out brochures touting the proposed facility. The corporation lobbied businesses all over the country, hoping to influence the selection process. Keeping the team together, it planned the New England site in the hopes that ERDA would see that New England was going to continue the work anyway, and could thus be "ready to launch SERI with a running start." The corporation also began efforts to get the state of New York to support the New England bid, despite the fact that New York had proposed a Long Island SERI facility. Levy and Edward King, the executive director of the New England Council, sent personalized letters to more than 700

state government energy directors, academics, and the business community, hoping to influence the process. In December, ERDA postponed the announcement once again, to February 1977.⁵

By the middle of January 1977 the New England team had spent nearly a quarter of a million dollars creating and promoting the proposal, and had used in-kind contributions of almost that amount. Tsongas aide Patrick D'Addario raised much of the money with the help of other Tsongas staff. In February, when ERDA postponed the announcement once again, to "sometime in March," Tsongas and D'Addario scheduled a meeting with Massachusetts senator Edward Kennedy and the new Speaker, "Tip" O'Neill. Tsongas carefully explained the SERI effort to O'Neill and adumbrated the advantages of the New England proposal: its focus upon commercialization rather than research, the importance of the major research institutions nearby, especially the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which had established a reputation for transferring important technologies to industry; and the proximity of a substantial base of highly educated high-tech employees. O'Neill became visibly bored, however. At one point, Tsongas mentioned the location of the initial building that the SERI effort would occupy before moving to its eventual Westborough, Massachusetts site. Kennedy looked up and directed his voice at O'Neill, "Forty Memorial Drive? That's in the District, isn't it?"⁶

O'Neill looked shocked. "The District. Ted, you know damn well that's in the District." O'Neill's congressional district had once served to launch young John F. Kennedy

⁵ Letters from Edward King and Lawrence Levy to Tsongas, 3 November 1976 and from Thomas P. O'Neill III to Joseph Healy, 15 February 1977, Box 178C, TC.

⁶ Patrick D'Addario interview, 24 September 2003 (qtns.); Lawrence Levy, "Solar Energy Intelligence Report," 28 February 1977, Box 178C, TC.

on his national political career. He then asked, “What did you say you guys wanted?” O’Neill attempted afterward to bring his considerable influence upon the Carter administration in support of the New England proposal. But other states increased their efforts, too. The Florida legislature passed a law donating state land to house a site, with a sunset clause allowing the land to revert to the state if it failed to win the bid. ERDA officials declined the offer in advance, but the state of Colorado followed suit, offering 560 acres atop an aggregate mine if the state won the institute.⁷

By early March, Tsongas had heard rumors that ERDA had finalized its choice. Another group of rumors circulated, too, about splitting the SERI facility into different sites. Tsongas wrote to ERDA requesting official notice. On March 4, he spoke with Ray Fields, chair of the SERI site selection committee, who assured him that no recommendation had been made and that the final decision would arrive at the end of the month. Tsongas then asked Robert Fri to put ERDA’s position on the written record. On March 25, much to Tsongas’s disappointment, ERDA awarded SERI to the Midwest Research Institute, which had proposed putting the site in Golden, Colorado. But Edward Kennedy, California governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr., and Hubert Humphrey (D-MN) had by this time all made “strong, personal arguments” to the Carter administration. Because of the intense lobbying effort, the administration had decided to put together a secondary plan for regional solar projects. And with the SERI award, ERDA announced four planning grants to place regional centers in Portland, Minneapolis, Atlanta, and Cambridge. Although the planning grant was small—it barely exceeded money already spent on the effort—it ensured that New England would not be left behind on solar energy development. And in a way, it

⁷ Patrick D’Addario interview, 24 September 2003 (qtms.); Lawrence Levy, “Solar Energy Intelligence Report,” 28 February 1977, Box 178C, TC.

represented a major victory for Tsongas, since ERDA officials had begun to reorient the planned mission of the SERI toward scientific study, rather than commercialization. ERDA directed the regional centers to focus on commercialization, which Tsongas believed would better serve the interests of New England.⁸

Tsongas still needed to initiate congressional action on his other economic development priority, the Lowell park proposal. Upon returning from his tour of nuclear facilities with Udall, Tsongas brought the team of consultants that had put together the “Brown Book,” the plan for the park, and Patrick Mogan, the originator of the park’s idea, to Washington. Concerned about opposition from relevant committee and subcommittee chairs, as well as Republicans, Tsongas brought together the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee chair Morris Udall, Subcommittee on Parks chair Philip Burton, Representative Keith Sebelius (R-KS), the ranking Republican on the parks subcommittee, and others. He viewed the meeting as a dress rehearsal for markup sessions. While Udall approved the proposal immediately, Burton voiced concerns, wondering about an urban park’s vulnerability to profiteering by real estate speculators and “unjust enrichment.” Potentially much more damaging, John Seiberling (D-OH) asked, “Why Lowell?,” and argued that his district also contained many dying industrial cities. Clearly, a viable park proposal needed to avoid arguments about economic development entirely, and focus on matters important to the park service. Indeed, Tsongas soon realized that any arguments about economics would

⁸ Tsongas press release, 7 March 1977, Box 170B, TC; Solar Energy Research Institute and Regional Solar Energy Centers: Impediments to their Effective Use (Comptroller General of the United States Report to the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, 18 August 1980), (qtn.), 5.

raise questions about fiscal responsibility and the cost of the park. The meeting helped Tsongas see some of the many issues he needed to iron out in the coming months.⁹

Throughout the spring of 1977, Tsongas's aide Fred Faust, who devoted most of his time to the park proposal, reworked the bill while Tsongas talked to other representatives about the proposed park as often as he could. Tsongas played paddle tennis regularly with other representatives, discussing the park and other pending legislation with them before and after. He cornered others at committee meetings. Even though he was an eastern representative, he sat through long hours discussing the vagaries of public land law, water rights, extraction, and ranching issues. He always participated in the discussions and quickly earned the respect of his colleagues by listening carefully and responding seriously. When he managed to get their support, he would come back to tell Faust, who marked their names off the board behind his desk. Tsongas always argued the merits of the proposal. Not one to trade favors with legislators or to make back-room deals, he relied upon logic, knowledge, and boundless energy to persuade others—he was relentless. In March Tsongas flew from Washington to Clinton, Massachusetts on Air Force One, discussing the park proposal with Jimmy Carter on the short trip to the President's first "Town Meeting." Interested, Carter asked Stuart Eizenstat, his top domestic advisor, to pledge the administration's cooperation. Dedicated to pushing the legislation through, Tsongas devoted not only Faust to the effort full-time, but put Steve Joncas and Patrick D'Addario of his Job Resources Section on the

⁹ Lowell Sun, 27 ("unjust") January 1977; Fred Faust letter to Carol C. McDonough, 20 April 1977, Box 167B, TC.

project half-time. He also enlisted the help of a congressional fellow and an intern from the National Park Service.¹⁰

In early April, Tsongas introduced the park bill, hoping that subcommittee chair Burton would view it favorably. Burton, however, feared that the bill would create an unwelcome precedent for urban areas. The National Park Service shared Burton's concern, worrying that the park would "open the floodgates" for other cities to propose similar plans. Tsongas worried about the Park Service's backlog of unfunded but authorized park projects, fearing that Lowell might meet a similar fate. And later that month the Interior Department's advisory board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments recommended to Secretary Cecil Andrus that the department limit its involvement in the proposal, particularly with regard to funding. Characterizing the board and its chair Philip Burton as "traditionalists" and "senior statesmen," Tsongas told the board that he would seek another review in the fall. He later criticized their findings as "reflective of that old Civil War battlefield mentality." Tsongas attended all of Burton's hearings on California's redwood trees, however, and hoped to educate him. And he, Faust, and other advocates began to de-emphasize the urban nature of the park and placed even more stress upon its historic and cultural attributes. Finally, Burton promised to allow hearings in the parks subcommittee before the end of 1978.¹¹

After Carter's fireside speech in February, the new president moved to address energy policy more comprehensively while Tsongas watched with interest. Carter asked trusted

¹⁰ Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003; Fred Faust interview, 9 October 2003; transcript of Fred Faust interview by Mehmed Ali, 13 February 2003; Lowell Sun, 6, 30 April; 3, 5 May 1977; Tsongas press release, 29 April 1977, Box 170B, TC.

¹¹ Lowell Sun, 7 ("open") 26 ("traditionalists," "senior," "reflective") 27, 30 April; 3 May 1977.

advisor James Schlesinger to assemble a team and Alvin Alm to head its efforts. Schlesinger, Alm, and their staff began to work towards Carter's self-imposed deadline of April 20, 1977. They worked mainly in isolation, because Carter wanted to avoid negotiating regional divisions and placating interest groups. Although the Carter team periodically appeared to seek public opinions—sending 450,000 questionnaires on White House stationary to randomly selected citizens, state and local officials, members of Congress, businesspeople and environmentalists—it did not have time to read the comments, and met with few industry and government officials to seek advice.¹²

“Tip” O’Neill believed that passage of Carter’s comprehensive energy legislation would require the creation of a new congressional committee, since jurisdiction over energy issues spanned several committees, including Interior and Insular Affairs; Ways and Means; Commerce, Science and Technology; and Banking. A similar idea had surfaced three years before, but committees feared a loss of influence and declined to support it. O’Neill decided to try again, and asked for a staff study of the issues. Morris Udall then suggested a compromise: O’Neill would appoint a committee to hold hearings on the National Energy Plan (NEP), draft a policy statement, and then refer the pieces of the plan to the appropriate committees for review. During floor action in February, Tsongas approached O’Neill and asked him for an appointment to the new House Ad-Hoc Energy Committee. O’Neill consented, for the same basic reason that he had appointed Thomas Ludlow Ashley (D-OH) as the head of the ad hoc committee—Tsongas was not identified with any particular special interest in energy, and O’Neill respected his intellect and interest. Tsongas, a second-term representative in his mid-thirties, stood out from the others on the thirty-seven member

¹² “Carter Energy Policy,” Energy Policy in Perspective, 555.

committee. Senior representatives like Ways and Means chair Al Ullman, (D-OR), Udall, and John Dingell, (D-MI), chair of the Commerce subcommittee on energy, dominated the group.¹³

Carter released NEP on time, but he feared that the public would lose interest during congressional deliberations. As Fred Hitz, James Schlesinger's lobbyist noted, "The only constituency for many of the elements . . . is posterity." Just before April 20, Carter released a CIA report showing that the USSR would begin competing with the United States for oil on world markets by the mid-1980s. An article in Foreign Affairs following the CIA report asserted the same general thesis more comprehensively and warned that the crisis of the 1980s would be of the same magnitude as that of 1973-1974. To amplify further the urgency of NEP's passage, Carter issued a deadline of October 1 for congressional action.¹⁴

NEP included about one hundred discrete but interdependent proposals arranged in ten parts. Carter allocated primacy of place to energy conservation. But much to Tsongas's dismay, NEP's plan to stimulate conservation relied on many of the same tools that President Ford had urged, such as a gasoline excise tax, utility rate reform, and oil and natural gas pricing reforms. NEP did specify tax credits for building conservation measures, but mostly disappointed Tsongas. Tsongas was concerned about NEP's other measures, too. NEP called for increasing reliance on coal, uranium, and renewable energy sources, but did nothing to address the oil and gas producers' domination of these sources. And despite the fact that Carter had asked for \$200 million in direct relief for low-income consumers

¹³ Arenberg interview; Washington Post, 29 January, 23 April 1977.

¹⁴ Washington Post, 18 April 1977; "Carter Up Close," Newsweek, 2 May 1977; James L. Cochrane, "Carter Energy Policy and the Ninety-fifth Congress," in Crawford Goodwin, ed., Energy Policy in Perspective, 559-577.

after the natural gas crisis, NEP did not directly assist low-income citizens, whom the increased prices most dramatically affected. Carter wanted to wean U.S. consumers from their dependence upon foreign supplies of oil and natural gas, so the administration's plan outlined a system that allowed oil and gas prices to approach their marginal replacement costs—the price that best reflected costs of new production. Such a system would, theoretically, allow prices to reflect the true costs of production, so domestic prices of oil and gas would rise to the level of import prices. Prices would also rise in response to Carter's creation of a strategic oil reserve. Although Americans would consume less, NEP did not emphasize that conservation, and its reliance on increased prices, spelled disaster for New England.¹⁵

After the huge oil price increases of the early 1970s abated, most northeastern politicians focused on other inequities. In October of 1976, governors and budget officials from 14 northern states had met in Chicago to plan towards a redress of regional federal funding imbalances. They charged that Midwestern states received only 70 cents of federal money for every dollar their residents paid in taxes, and that northeastern states received only 86 cents. They chose to focus on the formulas that determined Medicaid, Title I education, and community development block grants. In Congress, the efforts of the governors received support from Northeast-Midwest Economic Advancement Coalition, which had also emerged that year. Encouraged by the cooperation they encountered in Chicago, and emboldened by the perception that they might finally have an ex-governor in the White House, the governors of Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania met in Saratoga Springs, New York as the

¹⁵ "Carter Energy Policy," 559.

Coalition of Northeastern Governors (CONEG). The two coalitions eventually met with some success in reforming block grant formulas, but Carter's NEP mainly ignored their plight. Drafted in secret, without input from congressional leaders, Carter's plan ignored interest groups—whether industrial, environmental, or regional—equally.¹⁶

Tsongas began to think that Carter did not want Americans to consume less energy overall. Like his predecessors, Carter assumed that increased energy use was a prerequisite for economic growth. Since he could not advocate a declining economy, some energy sources had to increase. Carter believed that coal would fill the gap. After all, the U.S. had huge untapped coal sources. Some studies showed that the United States had enough coal reserves to continue the use-rate of the 1970s for three and one-half centuries. NEP suggested that the country increase coal use by two-thirds. To wean electricity-generating companies from natural gas to coal, Carter proposed an oil and natural gas use tax. Of course, coal did not burn as cleanly as natural gas. So, to counter the environmental problems of increased coal use, Carter proposed requiring the best available control technologies in new coal-fired power plants. Carter also wanted to pour money into coal research and development. But increased coal use presented other environmental perils. Moreover, Congress spent part of the spring developing strip mining legislation that, according to western coal mining interests, would render Carter's coal production goals impossible to meet. Morris Udall attempted to accommodate industry concerns about strip

¹⁶ Christian Science Monitor, 2 November 1976; Lowell Sun 12, 14, 15 November 1976; Melvin R. Laird "Forward," Edward J. Mitchell (ed.), Energy: Regional Goals and the National Interest (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1976), iv; James L. Cochrane, "Carter Energy Policy," in Crawford D. Goodwin, ed., Energy Policy in Perspective: Today's Problems, Yesterday's Solutions (Washington, The Brookings Institution, 1981), 550-3; Franklin Tugwell, The Energy Crisis and the American Political Economy (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 114-15.

mining regulations. The Carter administration, however, asked simultaneously for stronger environmental legislation and dramatically increased coal extraction.¹⁷

Tsongas publicly called the Carter energy plan “tough, fair, and above all, necessary,” pointing to the gasoline tax as the most controversial component. But he quickly moved to fight the provisions he viewed as most offensive. Throughout the spring, Tsongas fought to strengthen the strip mining legislation then before Congress. He objected to increased reliance on coal for four reasons: its disproportionate impact upon the Northeast, its impact upon research and development expenditures, its impact upon the areas where coal would be mined, and its long-term impact upon the environment. He co-sponsored Udall’s strip-mining bill, wrote an amendment to protect agricultural land from strip-mining, and helped steer the bill through the House-Senate conference committee. He hoped that opposition to its environmental effects would stall coal conversion in the Northeast. But Carter argued that coal burning could be made cleaner. Power companies could scrub sulfur from emissions, for example, lessening acid rain. But Tsongas worried that the development of coal emission-scrubbing technologies would absorb research and development funding better devoted to renewable fuels.¹⁸

Tsongas searched for ways to oppose increased reliance on coal and urged Udall to initiate hearings about the long-term impact of coal use. In early June of 1977, Udall asked Tsongas to chair the hearings, the first to address the issue of global warming. Tsongas opened the hearings by asking colleagues to waive traditions forcing visitors not testifying to sit in the back of the hearing room, and he asked that six members of the British Parliament

¹⁷ Washington Post, 28 April 1977.

¹⁸ Tsongas press release, 21 April 1977, Box 164D, TC.

and their guests from Germany and Norway also have an opportunity to ask questions at the end of the testimony. The MPs and their guests were in the United States as energy experts to meet with Tsongas and others about the U.S. response to the energy crisis. Their presence underscored the international importance of the proceedings. In his opening statement Tsongas highlighted the dangers of fossil fuels and nuclear fuels, issued a call for energy conservation and other alternative sources of energy, and introduced the first panelist, John O'Leary, administrator of the Federal Energy Administration. O'Leary emphasized the dangers of dependence on foreign sources of oil and outlined the Carter administration's seemingly balanced approach. In advocating increased coal use, O'Leary focused upon the problem of sulfur emissions, detailing the complicated Carter plan to balance regional interests and the environment. Then he contrasted coal's abundance with the scarcity of oil and gas resources. He did not seem concerned about increasing CO₂ levels, noting at one point that in burning coal, "the basic problems are emissions of particulates, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen oxides." He advocated increased research and development as well as tax incentives to interest private energy companies in new technologies.¹⁹

Tsongas questioned O'Leary about changing rainfall patterns and rising temperatures resulting from increased concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere. O'Leary called the research that Tsongas cited in his question "the hobby of a few individuals," urging, instead, organized research into the question. When Tsongas asked him which agency should conduct such research, he suggested the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Then O'Leary attempted to divert attention from coal by noting that any form of energy

¹⁹ House Interior and Insular Affairs Subcommittee on Energy and the Environment, Hearings on the Long-Term Impacts of Coal Use, 9 June 1977, 1-8.

production produced mostly waste heat. He estimated the overall efficiency of the U.S. energy production system at 4 to 8 percent. At that point, Representative Weaver and several other members of the subcommittee entered the room, distracting some of the discussants.²⁰

After the interruption, Tsongas returned to questioning O'Leary about research, suggesting that money currently invested in the Clinch River Breeder Reactor go to energy conservation research. But O'Leary did not believe that conservation could bridge the gap between energy supply and the energy demand required for a reasonable rate of economic growth. He believed in funding solar research as well, but simply did not see any feasible alternative to coal and felt that the effects of coal burning on the climate were not irreversible. Weaver interrupted, asking whether he had heard O'Leary correctly, that the U.S. used its energy resources at an efficiency rate of forty-eight percent. "No," O'Leary answered, "if you heard 48 I was saying 4 to 8." Tsongas watched, aghast, as O'Leary explained that the energy expended to mine, refine, burn, transport and transform coal, even aside from repairing environmental impacts, consumed all but 4 percent of the energy latent in the underground coal. O'Leary noted that they could retrieve 30 percent of that if they lighted the room with florescent bulbs, which could result in a total efficiency of possibly as much as 8 percent. Despite the dismal efficiency rate for coal production, he concluded the question-and-answer period by stating that the country could either "go to coal" or "go to pieces."²¹

²⁰ Hearings, 8-12.

²¹ Hearings, 12-14.

The next presenter, South Dakota governor Arthur Link, catalogued western concerns about the effects of increased strip-mining on his and other western states, including the development of trailer towns to service new mining facilities and power plant operations, school overcrowding, increased need for public facilities to serve a transient workforce, crime and cultural stresses, and the lack of an adequate tax base for building facilities to transport coal and workers. After Governor Link, Dr. James Liverman of ERDA testified that he did not see an impending crisis. But his statements seemed to contradict that conclusion. Liverman believed that ERDA should put a great deal of money into studying the environmental effects of increased CO₂ in the atmosphere. He did not intend to be alarmist about the situation, but he painted a scary picture, nonetheless, of exponential increases in atmospheric CO₂ levels. He characterized the potential problem of climate change as imminent, since atmospheric CO₂ would double in the first quarter of the 21st century, and the changes would be relatively irreversible. ERDA had already begun to study the issue, but would require a great deal more money and international cooperation to understand whether drastically cut energy production could reverse the trend.²²

Tsongas asked Liverman about conservation as an alternative. Liverman recalled O'Leary's figure of 4 percent and noted that the savings resulting from not turning on the lights would be more than twenty times as great as using florescent lights due to savings in locating, extracting, refining and transporting the coal energy. The hearings impressed and depressed everybody in attendance. At one point during the day, Governor Link revised the last paragraph of his testimony. Instead of asserting that the western states were "fully prepared to meet the great challenge" he said simply that the western states were "fully

²² Hearings, 15-32.

cognizant of the great challenge.” More disturbingly, Edward King of the New England Council argued that Carter’s coal conversion plan spelled disaster for New England. Forcing New England power plants to operate on coal would push the region further into non-compliance with the standards set by the Clean Air Act and would be far too expensive, since the Carter administration’s figures on the cost of coal in New England were low by a wide margin. King argued that nuclear power would be much more economical for New England and would not pose environmental risks as serious as coal. King asserted that only the free market should shape energy decisions, leaving Tsongas flabbergasted. “When I read the statement,” Tsongas responded, “we should get the bureaucracy out of the way and we will solve the problem, it really saddens me.”²³

Clearly troubled, Tsongas posed a new question to the scientists: Assuming that Carter would scrap the Clinch River Breeder Reactor and devote the savings to research and development of alternative fuels, how much money should go to which fuels? Impulsively, one scientist suggested that solar energy, as the most capital intensive, would rank lowest on his priority list. Tsongas asked him to put that statement in writing and to submit data to back it up. Tsongas agreed with King about the inappropriateness of coal for New England. About the multiple dilemmas of energy supply and environmental issues he remarked that people may feel that they “might as well stay home and get drunk.” The hearings played an important role in Tsongas’s view of coal as the energy source of last resort. He called

²³ Hearings, 40-55.

increased use of coal “an even more frightening prospect than greater reliance on nuclear technology.”²⁴

After examining the environmental consequences of nuclear and coal energy production, Tsongas urged a stronger role for energy conservation. Carter’s top energy advisor, James Schlesinger, had estimated that 30 percent of energy consumed in the United States was wasted, and a Worldwatch institute study put the figure at half. The coal hearings helped Tsongas realize that even those figures were optimistic. Tsongas believed that conservation could be achieved in other ways, ways that would not so drastically impact New England or alternative energy research. But as a second-term representative, he had little power to set the congressional agenda, particularly since the new President, for the most part, had already set it. In his district, Tsongas held more influence. He set Mitch Tyson, an intern, loose on the problem in the spring. A graduate student enrolled in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s masters program in nuclear engineering and political science, Tyson first examined methods of helping Tsongas’s constituents to conserve energy. The staff discussed implementation and came up with the Family Energy Assistance Plan (FEAP). FEAP sought to educate constituents about their energy use, so that they would take it into account when making purchases. The plan also sought to educate people about energy issues in general and alternative sources of energy. It provided strategies for home energy use reduction and attempted to give people a sense of the financial impact of reduced use. Tsongas and Tyson provided an extensive bibliography of resources to help convince

²⁴ New York Times, Lowell Sun, 10 June 1977; Boston Herald American, 19 June 1977 (“Might”); Powerlines, 21 July 1977.

people about the energy prospects for the future and the urgency of the energy crisis, and they unveiled the plan to other congressional offices.²⁵

Through the spring and summer of 1977, Tsongas worked at the edges of national energy policy to attach amendments to bills. He asked colleagues to co-sign a letter to automobile companies asking them to end advertising that encouraged waste and to use fuel economy estimates as part of their advertising campaigns. But few representatives joined him in this effort, despite the fact that NEP pointed to the high weight-to-power ratio in American models as a major source of waste. In early June, Tsongas successfully attached two amendments to a bill combining many of the energy-related executive offices into the Department of Energy. One amendment called for the examination of environmental considerations in developing new technologies, which he hoped would favor solar development over nuclear and coal research. His other amendment promoted weatherization in residential construction projects. He also attached amendments to ERDA's reauthorization bill that summer encouraging research in solar, wind, and biomass sources, as well as energy education initiatives.²⁶

When the Ad Hoc Energy Committee finally met to consider NEP in July, many had begun to consider Tsongas a serious conservation advocate. On the first day the committee deliberated, a Tsongas amendment to remove "crippling restrictions" on utility involvement in supplying home conservation devices became the first attached to NEP. Tsongas had worked with Bay State Gas and Lowell Gas for months on the amendment. The same day he also successfully attached an amendment requiring fuel efficiency standards and pricing

²⁵ New York Times, 21, 23 February 1977; Dear Colleagues letter, 14 June 1977; "Family Energy Assistance Plan Agenda," undated, Box 170B, TC; Mitch Tyson interview, 2 October 2003.

²⁶ Tsongas press releases 13, 20 May, 3, 15 June, 20 September, 20 October 1977, Box 170B, TC.

penalties for off-highway motor vehicles, although the committee later modified this amendment, turning it into a study. At one point during the late-night proceedings to consider the gasoline tax portions of Title II, the most controversial portion of the bill, Tsongas attempted to introduce an amendment requiring the Secretary of Transportation to study the conservation potential of bicycles. The amendment totaled only 150 words or so, but it caught weary representatives off-guard. Michigan's John Dingell asked of its provision regarding construction grants: "What would they go for . . . factories to construct bicycles?" Dingell and a few other representatives objected to the amendment, believing that it was not germane to the Title. Tsongas considered these objections and took another approach, introducing the bicycle study provision as Title III. His insistence upon the importance of such a study, combined with the late hour and complex political maneuvering, provided well-needed comic relief to the deliberations. Representative Walter Flowers (D-AL) suggested adding mopeds to the act. Clarence Brown (R-OH) attempted to add roller skates. Chuckling representatives finally voted 16-11 for Title III. Tsongas appreciated the levity of the situation but later chided the parochialism of critics of Title III, noting, "We are the only country in the world that finds the use of bicycles to be humorous." Indeed, many had criticized NEP's supposed focus on conservation because they believed conservation antithetical to American culture.²⁷

When the bill finally arrived on the House floor for debate, opposition coalesced around Carter's main conservation measure, the gasoline tax. The gasoline tax the administration proposed, termed the "standby gasoline tax," would have been contingent upon the failure of voluntary conservation. If consumers failed to achieve conservation

²⁷ Tsongas press release, 21 July 1977; Washington Post, 25 July 1977 ("What would"); Boston Globe, 8 August 1977 ("We").

targets in 1979, gasoline taxes would increase 5 percent. Increased taxes would raise the cost of gasoline, which would cause consumers to purchase less. Moreover, the gasoline tax would increase every year conservation targets were not met. In a floor statement before the vote Tsongas supported the measure as a way of avoiding the “rationing, shortages, prohibitive fuel costs” that he envisioned a few years in the future. He was concerned about the impact of the gas tax on New England, but he remained convinced that the tax would encourage conservation. He also knew that provision would fail, which it did a few days later. Carter’s NEP remained intact, however, aside from House rejection of the gasoline tax, thanks mostly to O’Neill’s careful leadership and appeals for party unity and congressional responsibility. But NEP did not fare as well in the Senate, which quickly became mired in battles over natural gas price deregulation. Tsongas knew that New England had to find its own way out of its energy dilemmas. Speaker O’Neill had been right—energy policy would be “the most parochial issue to come down the pike.” Tsongas began to search for a way to bring New England’s diverse interests together on energy issues in a way that would make sense.²⁸

In August Tsongas wrote to Robert Pratt, who had in July become the executive director of the New England Congressional Caucus. Tsongas suggested a meeting, arguing that “New England must anticipate the future if it is to protect and foster its economic and social development.” He wanted to discuss a “workshop on New England regional energy policy and national energy planning” which he wanted to convene in the Boston area in the late spring of 1978. Tsongas hoped that by that time they would see “how the President will implement the plan as passed by Congress” and the plan’s implications for New England.

²⁸ Tsongas, “Floor Statement on Gasoline Tax,” 4 August 1977, Box 170B, TC; Congressional Quarterly, Energy Policy, 2 (qtn.).

An astute observer of the failings of energy policy, Tsongas told Pratt that he wanted—not “another litany of energy facts and figures” or “theoretical star-gazing at alternative futures”—but a detailed proposal of “policies, economic initiatives, and legislation which the New England governments and Congressional delegations should undertake.” He proposed that the delegation convene a workshop of fewer than fifty representatives from Congress, state governments, banks, utilities, the construction industry, labor and consumer groups, as well as a representative from the President’s office. The delegates would discuss the supply and delivery of energy resources, (looking as far as fifty years into the future), conservation and how to finance it, the environmental and social consequences of each alternative, and New England’s relations with other regions.²⁹

Tsongas and Pratt had already met much earlier, in Professor Arthur Moss’s seminar at the Kennedy School of Government in the early 1970s. At the time, Tsongas had failed to impress Pratt. Since then, however, Tsongas had changed Pratt’s opinion with his impressive and relentless work on Lowell’s park proposal. Pratt felt that congressmen divided themselves into two groups—“showboaters” and “people who got things done.” He saw Tsongas as one of the latter, a legislator who was “incredible” in his effectiveness, especially regarding energy policy. Pratt knew that Speaker O’Neill liked Tsongas, and that Tsongas tenaciously pursued his goals and knew a great deal about energy policy. Tsongas and Pratt met in late August in Tsongas’s office to discuss the proposal. In September, Pratt asked Tsongas to co-chair (with Republican Representative Stuart McKinney of Connecticut) the New England Congressional Caucus’s task force on energy and transportation. Pratt and the delegates established the task force in part to examine NEP’s

²⁹ Tsongas letter to Robert Pratt, Director of New England Congressional Caucus, 25 August 1977, Box 167A, TC (qtns.)

impact upon New England. The task force immediately focused upon conservation and renewable energy research issues. Meanwhile, as Pratt and Tsongas continued to discuss their proposed energy conference, they realized that to overcome the difficulties of energy policy, even at the regional level, would require bringing all of the stakeholders together. Such a workshop would have to include a balanced representation of not only states, but the interest groups themselves. Tsongas also wanted it to operate differently from Congress, working not towards a majority, but towards a consensus among stakeholders. Pratt realized that the delegates would need more than just a long weekend to make any real headway. Over the next few months Tsongas and Pratt solidified their vision into a six-to-eight-month consensus-building process involving more than one hundred stakeholders. Such an expansive undertaking would require resources, so Pratt put together grant proposals to the Commerce Department and, later that year, to Carter's new Department of Energy. He also assembled a small staff to help push the process along. He could not pay them at first and had to deal with a potential revolt in the winter of 1977-1978, but eventually, with Tsongas's help, he obtained about \$250,000 in grant funding.³⁰

During the fall of 1977, while the Senate split the NEP into smaller chunks, Tsongas kept his eye on a series of alarming events in Ethiopia, the country in which he had served in the Peace Corps. In 1974 Marxist revolutionaries had seized power from Emperor Haile Sellasie and begun working feverishly to hold on to power. In 1977, the Carter administration decided to reduce military aid to Ethiopia because of increasing allegations of human rights abuses by the country's ruler, Mengistu Haile Miriam. Tsongas applauded Carter's interest in human rights, but feared that focusing on human rights concerns might

³⁰ New England Congressional Caucus press release, 19 September 1977; Robert Pratt interview, 8 October 2003.

create unintended consequences in Ethiopia. After Carter reduced military aid, the Ethiopian government closed down the U.S. military mission and four other U.S. offices and ordered U.S. personnel to leave the country. At the same time, the Ethiopian government became increasingly nervous about a revolution in the province of Eritrea and the growing influence of Somalia. Early in 1977, Cuban premier Fidel Castro visited Ethiopia. Egyptian president Anwar Sadat then expressed concern about Soviet intervention in the Horn of Africa. The Carter Administration temporarily stopped arms shipments to the country. Mengistu appealed to the U.S.S.R. for help and signed a series of documents promoting mutual cooperation. Subsequently, the U.S. House and Senate passed military aid bills that cut off all support for Ethiopia.³¹

Tsongas watched the situation expand as Somali troops invaded Ethiopia's Ogaden region. The Somalis used U.S.-supplied arms in attacking Ethiopian troops, so Ethiopia asked for an emergency meeting of the African Unity Organization, summoning U.S. and British diplomats and complaining about arms sales to Somalia. Carter responded by supporting AUO mediation efforts, but the situation in the Horn increasingly deteriorated. By August, the Western Somali Liberation Front had seized control of almost the entire Ogaden region, and the U.S.S.R considered supplying arms to Ethiopia to stabilize the region. By September the Soviets agreed to supply Ethiopia's ruler with forty-eight advanced MIG jet fighters, tanks and missiles worth about \$385 million. In response, U.S. officials began talks with Ethiopia about resuming arms shipments. Pro-Somali rebels then blocked oil shipments to Addis Ababa, the Ethiopian capital, and forces on both sides prepared for a major battle. At this point, the Carter administration decided to back away

³¹ New York Times, 20, 27 February; 16 March; 5, 24-26, 28 April; 2, 25, 27 29 May; 16 June 1977.

from the region, in the belief that Soviet influence there would be short-lived. The supply of arms to Ethiopia had already hurt the Soviet relationship with Somalia. By November, Somalia had ordered the Soviet advisors to leave. The U.S.S.R increased Ethiopia's military aid to a total of \$800 million, and Cuban troops in Ethiopia prepared for a counter-offensive against the Somalis in the Ogaden region.³²

As Tsongas monitored this bleak series of events, he discussed Ethiopia with other members of the House, including Representative Dan Bonker (D-WA). They scheduled a fact-finding mission to the Horn of Africa for December, and the State Department asked that they deliver a sealed message to Mengistu. Both Tsongas and Bonker feared that the growing instability in the region, coupled with the increasing Soviet presence, could lead to a conflict with the U.S.S.R. They wondered openly whether "history is repeating itself," comparing the situation with the fall of Cuba. They wanted to ensure that the U.S. did not treat Ethiopia "as a satellite of the Soviet Union rather than as an independent country seeking to hold itself together and repel an invading force." They met with the heads of four African states on their twelve-day tour of Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Kenya, Egypt and Djibouti, discovering that the Africans simply did not believe the U.S. claims of neutrality.³³

Tsongas and Bonker arrived in an Ethiopia that Marxism had transformed. Tsongas found dark, deserted streets that had once bustled under Selassie. Only huge posters of Marx, Engels, and Lenin lit by spotlights greeted their arrival in the otherwise dark town

³² New York Times, 11-14, 25, 28, 31 July; 1, 3, 4, 9, 11, 14, 15, 18, 26 August; 2, 16, 18, 23 September; 2, 3, 22 October; 2, 14, 16, 20 November 1977.

³³ "Statement to President Carter by Congressman Don Bonker and Paul Tsongas Concerning U.S. Policy in the Horn of Africa," 26 January 1978 (qtns.), Box 146D, TC; Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives. War in the Horn of Africa: Report of a Factfinding Mission to Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya, December 12 to 22, 1977, to the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, February 3, 1978).

square of Addis Ababa. Two days later they met Colonel Mengistu in what had once been a palace of Haile Selassie. In an “austere, high-ceilinged, and cavernous” room, under a picture of Marx illumined with florescent light, Tsongas greeted Mengistu in Amharic. Tsongas, Bonker and their interpreters discussed the new order while they were served tea. In their half-hour conversation, interrupted periodically by roars of the imperial lions, which Mengistu had kept, and by the delicate chimes of the ex-emperor’s antique clock, Mengistu told them that their presence gave him hope that the misunderstandings between Ethiopia and the United States might be worked out. He urged Tsongas and Bonker to speak frankly, and assured them that he would also. They clarified their roles. Although there would be no possibility of military assistance, they claimed to represent a congressional group interested in human rights but lacking the knowledge of how to apply such a policy. They assured Mengistu that the group they represented was not party to “the old East-West confrontation.” Tsongas asked Mengistu about his intentions to invade Somalia if he was able to beat the rebels in the Ogaden and in Eritrea. Mengistu assured him that he would not make the same mistake that Somalia had made. Tsongas also asked him again about human rights abuses, having seen bodies lying about that morning from the previous night’s government activities. Mengistu argued that the main problem of the revolution still concerned landlords’ attempts to retain power under the new regime. Tsongas told Mengistu that he and Bonker would convey that information to their colleagues, and, noting that his district encompassed Concord and Lexington, offered to send him a medallion commemorating the American Revolution.³⁴

³⁴ Memorandum of Conversation, 13 December 1977 (“the old”), Box 164D, TC; Paul Tsongas, The Road to Here (New York: Alfred A. Knopf and Company, 1981), 162-66 (“austere”).

Mengistu passionately argued that Ethiopia had no plans to align with the Soviet Union, describing non-alignment as Ethiopia's "responsibility to Africa." He argued that, although the Soviets were helping in their war in Eritrea, Ethiopians would not join with the Soviets, just as they had not sided with the United States when the U.S. supported their military. He noted that although the Soviet Union normally supported Somalia, it opposed Somali expansion into Eritrea, and had thus decided to arm Ethiopians. Tsongas and Bonker believed him.³⁵

After returning to the United States, Tsongas and Bonker met with Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and began to push the Carter administration to renew negotiations with Ethiopia. They argued that the U.S. was driving that nation closer to the Soviet Union, which would not only ruin U.S.-Ethiopian relations but also worsen the Ethiopian human rights record. "Events are intensifying rapidly in the Horn, and the crisis has the potential magnitude of another Middle East," he told Vance. Two days later Tsongas and Bonker met with the president to discuss the situation further. In their half-hour meeting they told the president about their trip and asked Carter to approach the problems of the region "from the perspective of African Nationalism rather than U.S.-Soviet rivalry." He agreed with their position. Carter had already maintained that "inordinate fear of communism" had led the U.S. to "fight fire with fire." Tsongas emerged feeling that Carter would follow their suggestions and "undertake a more even-handed policy" in the Horn of Africa.³⁶

³⁵ Memorandum of Conversation, 13 December 1977, Box 164D, TC.

³⁶ Tsongas press release, 24 ("Events"), 26 ("undertake" and "from") January 1978, Box 126C, TC; William Stueck, "Placing Jimmy Carter's Foreign Policy," in Gary M. Fink and Hugh Davis Graham eds., The Carter Presidency: Policy Choices in the Post-New Deal Era (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1998), ("inordinate," "fight"), 251.

Tsongas and Bonker also asked Carter to call on Somalia to withdraw from the Ogaden and to warn Ethiopia not to cross the border into Somalia. They called for a moratorium on arms sales and supplies, as well as a United Nations Security Council Resolution. Within a few days, Carter sent a special emissary, the deputy assistant for national security David L. Aaron, to Mengistu. Mengistu assured Aaron that Ethiopia would not invade Somalia or other neighboring countries and that he would receive a U.S. ambassador. Carter administration officials acknowledged the role that Tsongas and Bonker had played in opening up dialogue between the two countries.³⁷

To many foreign policy analysts, Carter's foreign policy stance seemed as contradictory as aspects of his energy policy. Détente during the Nixon-Ford era had de-emphasized ideological competition between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. But Carter pressed the Soviet Union to improve human rights at the same time he sought reductions in strategic nuclear arms. Watching Carter's contradictory policy develop, Tsongas and Bonker urged him not to link the Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty (SALT) to the war in the Horn of Africa, which Vance had been recommending. Tsongas also began to introduce legislation in the House Banking Committee to shape U.S. foreign policy. That committee held jurisdiction over the U.S. Export-Import Bank. Tsongas authored an amendment that would end loan guarantees to South Africa unless the country took steps to end apartheid, the country's institutionalized policies of racial separation. The amendment passed in the

³⁷ New York Times, 22 February 1978; Tsongas press release, 9 February, 9, March 1978, Box 169B, TC.

committee by a 10-5 vote, so Tsongas began to think of other ways to use economic pressure against apartheid.³⁸

Tsongas longed for more active involvement in foreign affairs, and listened intently to the Senate debates on ratification of the Panama Canal Treaties. The initiative for the treaties began with the Nixon-Ford administration. Ronald Reagan, Gerald Ford's Republican primary opponent, had made the treaties a national political issue. For Jimmy Carter, the treaties represented a referendum on his power to conduct foreign policy. Watching Massachusetts Senator Edward Brooke struggle with what seemed to Tsongas an easy decision made him angry. While vocal opponents of the treaties tended to echo Reagan's jingoistic rhetoric, Brooke usually did not. But Tsongas saw the issue in stark contrasts.³⁹

One night in late February, Tsongas stayed up late with his wife Nicola discussing whether or not to challenge Brooke, who would be up for re-election that year. Brooke looked increasingly vulnerable. Tsongas's chief legislative aide Richard Arenberg had coordinated benchmark polls about four times per year, beginning with the month after Tsongas's first congressional term started. The polls always asked questions about other political figures in the state, including Brooke. Brooke's position had begun to slide more than two years earlier in Arenberg's polls, particularly around Boston's suburbs on Route 128. Tsongas approached Arenberg and Dennis Kanin the morning after his late-night discussion with Nicola. Arenberg and Kanin estimated that Tsongas would need a million

³⁸ *New York Times*, 22 February 1978; Tsongas press release, 17 March, 13 April 1978, Box 169B, TC; Stueck, "Placing," 250-51; Burton I. Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1993), 94-96.

³⁹ Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003.

dollars to compete with an incumbent senator. Then all of them put the issue aside, deciding that since Brooke's help would be needed to push the park bill through appropriations, they should wait.⁴⁰

On his thirty-fifth birthday, February 14, 1978, in a mill building once part of the Lawrence mill complex, Tsongas announced his re-election bid for Congress. Listening to the Panama Canal debates, and spending a second birthday celebration in a row raising money, his least favorite activity, soured his mood. He had also spent much of the day mediating a dispute between a developer interested in building in the downtown area and city officials supportive of the park plan. He told the crowd of more than 100 that he viewed semi-annual campaigns as "counterproductive." Then he launched into an uncharacteristic attack upon the few remaining local opponents of the Lowell park proposal. In remarks clearly directed at members of the city council, he warned that "attitude can torpedo the best plans." But he added that he didn't think there were any problems that people could not resolve "by viewing the city differently." He aimed his remarks in particular at Lowell city manager William Taupier, but did not mention him by name. He claimed that Taupier found it difficult to imagine change. Instead, Taupier thought that the only way to save Lowell was to tear down the symbols of decline—the old mill buildings—and start from scratch. Tsongas knew that real issues remained, legal and structural issues, but those were easier to resolve. Moreover, he would soon get a chance to tackle them.

⁴⁰ Memo from Dennis Kanin and Richard Arenberg to District Staffers 22 April 1975; Tsongas press release 5 December 1978, Box B-13B, TC; Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003; Stueck, "Placing," 248-52.

Burton had already scheduled hearings before the House Interior Committee's subcommittee on Parks and Recreation in just three days.⁴¹

During the previous year, Tsongas and his staff had made excellent progress promoting the historical value of Lowell, as well as settling some of the issues involved in creating an urban park. By September 1977, they managed to persuade some members of the House Interior and Insular Affairs' Park Subcommittee, as well as NPS director William Whalen, to visit Lowell. On a cold and sometimes rainy day, the group visited the Lowell Museum and the Wannalancit Mill, toured the downtown area of the proposed park on foot, and ended at a reception at the Pilling Mill. Whalen hesitated as they approached the Northern Canal in pouring rain. Under skies that threatened lightning, he asked if he could skip the canal tour. Faust and the others rushed him down the bank to the boat. Whalen and committee members and staff were impressed with the passionate and outspoken support for the importance of Lowell to the nation's history. Shortly thereafter, Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus designated the Locks and Canals District of Lowell as a historical landmark, adding considerable weight to the historical arguments for the park.⁴²

Convincing the National Park Service that Lowell would comply with the agency's requirements took considerable effort. The Park Service feared that it would have to take properties through eminent domain if local businesses ignored the regulations. The city of Lowell agreed to alter zoning regulations to accommodate the park, but the Service felt that this might not be enough, anticipating problems like "deterioration of properties, non-compliance by owners of existing properties, and incompatible uses." And the Park Service

⁴¹ Lowell Sun, 14 February 1978 (qtns.); Boston Herald American, 29 January 1979.

⁴² Tsongas letter to Lydia Howard, 9 September 1977, Box 172C, TC; Transcript of Fred Faust interview by Mehmed Ali, 13 February 2003, CLH.

worried even more about the cost. It already operated three parks in urban areas: Gateway, in New York City and part of New Jersey; Golden Gateway, in San Francisco; and Cuyohoga, between Cleveland and Akron. All three were increasingly expensive to operate. Accordingly, the Park Service commissioned a study to prioritize limited additions to its urban commitments. Proposals for new urban parks at this time involved the Chattahoochie River, near Atlanta, Georgia; Jean Lafitte, comprised of several historic sites in the Mississippi Delta near New Orleans; the Santa Monica Mountains and the Channel Islands, near Los Angeles; Pine Barrens, in Southern New Jersey; and Lowell. To Tsongas and others increasingly concerned with energy conservation, urban parks made much more sense than national parks far from urban centers. Frank Keefe, the Massachusetts state planner, noted that urban parks save energy “by bringing parks to where people live.” Looking back on the previous decade of state land acquisitions, Keefe charged that state policies had fostered urban sprawl. He also claimed that creating national parks in areas far from cities just attracted “more people there to trample around.”⁴³

Outside of the Park Service, subcommittee chair Burton remained Tsongas’s major concern before the February hearings. He had incorporated the park bill, H.R. 10790, into an omnibus parks bill including about 100 other projects. Some, but not Tsongas and his staff, thought the proposal would fare better as part of the omnibus. Tsongas, however, did not want to offend Burton by refusing. Publicly, Tsongas called the omnibus bill “the most

⁴³ Fred Faust letter to Gerald Hayes, Department of Community Affairs, Commonwealth of Massachusetts 23 September 1977 (“deterioration”), Box 167F, TC; Boston Globe, 13 February 1978 (“by”).

important single development” since he and others had introduced the legislation. Quietly, he introduced a separate park bill as a precautionary measure.⁴⁴

On February 17, Tsongas and his staff brought thirty-one people to testify about the park, including “Tip” O’Neill, and his son Tommy, the lieutenant governor of Massachusetts who had chaired the park study. Tsongas’s people worried about the Park Service’s testimony. Although they had dealt extensively with the agency, they feared that NPS administrators would introduce unanticipated questions into the testimony. Fred Faust spent much of the week “leaning on” Park Service officials, fearing “stupid and uneducated recommendations.” Park proponents based their arguments firmly upon the historical significance of Lowell’s buildings and canals to the story of the American Industrial Revolution, and to the history of America’s immigrants and working class. Through most of the full day’s hearings, park proponents grappled with NPS concerns about the management difficulties presented by the new urban park environment. With a few relatively minor modifications in the proposal, Park Service director Whalen testified in favor of the park bill and requested the subcommittee’s support. Unfortunately, Whalen and the others at the Park Service endorsed a version of the bill calling for less than two-thirds the funding proponents had requested.⁴⁵

Tsongas and Faust spent much of their time over the next few weeks discussing the funding issue with Dr. Richard Curry, Director of Legislation for the NPS. Curry was impressed by Tsongas and his staff, calling Tsongas “an important person to the National

⁴⁴ Lowell Sun, 17 February 1978.

⁴⁵ Lowell Sun, 15 (“leaning”) February, 10 (“stupid”) March 1978; Statement of William J. Whalen, Director, National Park Service, Concerning H.R. 10970, Legislation to Establish the Lowell National Park in Massachusetts, 17 February 1978, Box 167B, TC.

Park Service,” and noting that the NPS appreciated “what he has done nationally for preservation and conservation.” They eventually convinced Curry that the park would fail at the low level of funding that NPS proposed. When a slot opened up on March 9 for the subcommittee to consider the bill, they had not finished negotiations with Curry on the exact wording of the bill. Regardless, the NPS agreed tentatively to approve Tsongas’s revised bill.⁴⁶

On March 9, subcommittee chair Burton’s position on Tsongas’s separate bill remained unknown. But Tsongas had managed to collect fourteen proxies and expected to be able to defeat any proposed amendments. However, the speed of the process shocked even Tsongas. Just before the subcommittee considered the bill, Burton called it “not a controversial bill” and remarked that approval would take “about two minutes.” It took twelve, most of which Tsongas spent explaining the details of the agreement he had worked out with the NPS. The subcommittee voted its unanimous support. Tsongas hoped to get the bill before the full committee before recess and before the full House by the May 1, the appropriations deadline for the new fiscal year.⁴⁷

Speaking before the full Interior and Insular Affairs Committee on March 19, Tsongas recalled his school days in Lowell, arguing that he had learned about the “purple mountains’ majesty,” “truthfulness and cherry trees,” and “many wars.” He assured his colleagues that he did not dislike his education but regretted that he had “never learned about Lowell.” The Interior Committee passed the bill unanimously. Although legislators normally waited until bills were considered by the full House, Tsongas sent the bill up to the Senate for

⁴⁶ Lowell Sun, 10 March 1978.

⁴⁷ Lowell Sun, 10 March 1978.

consideration. Later that month, two Senate aides secretly visited Lowell to look at the downtown area that the legislation would affect. The Senate Parks subcommittee set hearings for April 6, at which Senators Kennedy and Brooke were expected to testify.⁴⁸

When in early April Tsongas finally introduced the bill on the House floor, he did so under special rules preventing amendments because he feared that Burton would reintroduce the omnibus parks bill on top of it or that some other representative would ruin its chances in a similar fashion. But the special rules required a two-thirds majority, and Republican representatives voiced concerns about the cost of the plan. Tsongas managed the floor debate of about forty minutes, with Speaker O'Neill and Burton waiting to help if he needed it. Keith Sebelius (R-KS), the ranking Republican on the parks subcommittee, spoke for nearly half of the 40 minutes, and attempted to change the park boundary. Tsongas fended off that attempt. Some also characterized the bill as "urban renewal" and an inappropriate vehicle for economic development initiatives. The bill failed 228-132.⁴⁹

Tsongas immediately sought Whalen's official opinion that the park was "not urban renewal," and Whalen quickly drafted a letter to that effect. Tsongas found that several Republicans had been offended by Tsongas's suspension of the rules, not the park proposal itself, and some conservative Democrats had followed them in voting the bill down. Some of the Republicans also believed that the bill had been "railroaded" through the committees. Tsongas asked O'Neill to help persuade them otherwise. Leo Dhiel, O'Neill's chief aide and friend, asked Faust to put together a letter from O'Neill describing reasons to support the park. Faust went home to concentrate, eventually cramming all of the possible historical

⁴⁸ "The Lowell National Historical Park" 20 March 1978, Box 164C, TC; Lowell Sun, 30 March 1978.

⁴⁹ Lowell Sun, 3 April 1978.

justifications onto one page in a small typeface. Apparently, either Dhiel or O’Neill had thought better of the lengthy explanation. When the letter went out it consisted of only one sentence: “Paul Tsongas and I would appreciate it if you would vote for the Lowell National Historical Park legislation.” Tsongas circulated Whalen’s letter among key Interior Committee Republicans, who assured Maryland’s Robert Bauman that the bill was not “urban renewal in disguise” and brought the bill to the floor again on April 11. During slightly more than an hour of debate the bill had only one more serious challenge. John Cunningham (R-WA) pointed out the price of the park, noting that it was slightly less than the expected federal budget deficit for that year. He claimed that such a proposal should really be the responsibility of local government and the private sector and finished by asking Tsongas, “Do you really feel this is a top drawer priority?” Tsongas replied, “Yes.” Seiberling provided the most relevant defense against the inevitable questions about the park’s cost, noting that much of the funding would come from a conservation fund supplied by oil-drilling royalties to the Department of the Interior. He juxtaposed the depletion of natural resources on federal land with the preservation of natural resources like the mills and canals of Lowell, arguing, “If we don’t do this, when our oil is depleted, we’ll have nothing to show for it.” The bill passed with a wide margin. Tsongas called the vote “fantastic” and celebrated with his staff, toasting them with champagne and thanking them for their help. By late April Tsongas had assurances from Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee chair James Abourezk (D-SD) that the bill would go through mark-up sessions and achieve a favorable Senate vote in time to appropriate funds to begin work on the park in October 1978, just before the November elections.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Lowell Sun, 3 (“railroaded”), 11 (“urban”), 12 (“do,” “yes,” “if,” “fantastic”) April 1978; “Statement by Mr.

On May 8, Tsongas discretely re-opened the subject of running for Brooke's Senate seat. Throughout the spring he had heard that "Tip" O'Neill's son Tommy was going to challenge Brooke. Tsongas asked Diehl if he knew when Tommy was going to announce his candidacy. Diehl expected that Tommy would announce the next day. On the fourteenth, Tsongas and "Tip" shared a flight from Boston to Washington. Expecting an announcement, they discussed strategy for Tommy's campaign, but when Tsongas got home, Nicola told him that Tommy had called and said he wasn't going to run after all. Tsongas was stunned. He and Niki took their two girls, Ashley and Katina, for a drive. They parked in a private place and talked. It seemed to both that they were no longer in control of their lives. When they got home Tsongas phoned Richard Arenberg and asked him to sit down. After Arenberg reported that he was now sitting, Tsongas said, "Tom's not running." There seemed little question—Tsongas had to run. On May 17, he announced his candidacy.⁵¹

It was the building Ethiopian crisis, however, that kept Tsongas's attention. On May 17, he appeared on television's *MacNeil-Lehrer Report* to discuss the rapidly deteriorating situation. Ethiopian forces, aided by tanks and planes from the U.S.S.R., had retaken the Ogaden and prepared to put down the rebellion in Eritrea. After a British film clip described the escalating conflict, Tsongas told Jim Lehrer why the Ethiopians valued Eritrea and explained the political situation that made the conflict seemingly inevitable. Tsongas related some of his own futile efforts to stop the coming slaughter, emphasizing the

Tsongas," 9 March 1978, Box 164D, TC; Whalen letter to Tsongas, 10 April 1978, ("not"), Box 167C, TC; transcript of Fred Faust interview by Mehmed Ali, 13 February 2003 ("Paul"); transcript of Richard Arenberg interview by Mehmed Ali, 16 May 2003; CLH.

⁵¹ Transcript of Richard Arenberg interview by Mehmed Ali, 16 May 2003, CLH; *Boston Herald American*, 29 January 1979.

hopelessness of the situation. Lehrer asked pointedly, “Thousands of people are about to die, and there’s really nothing that can be done about it, is that what you are saying?”

Tsongas replied that international intervention would be unlikely, especially since the conflict would occur within Ethiopian borders. “I think it’s going to be tragic,” he predicted. The interview segment, which had been taped earlier, made no mention of his candidacy for Brooke’s Senate seat.⁵²

Over the next few days Tsongas called everyone he could think of to ask advice and help, and to ensure that he knew who would run against him in the primary. Most people wished him luck but told him he was crazy to run against Brooke. Tsongas hoped that perception would keep serious Democratic contenders at bay. State Representative Elaine Noble had already entered the race, but she had even less statewide recognition than Tsongas’s 12 percent. She had little money and refused a small donation from a gay rights organization. As an “avowed lesbian” she wanted to avoid appearing to be running on that single issue. Tsongas and Nobel did not have the field to themselves for long, however. Other candidates emerged quickly, beginning with conservative radio commentator Howard Phillips on May 22. Later that week Brooke announced that he had “made a misstatement” about his finances in a deposition about his divorce settlement. Days later, Kathleen Sullivan Alioto, whom Washington insiders believed would be Tsongas’s biggest challenge, entered the race. Running in Massachusetts with an Irish-Italian name, she was married to the owner of the Boston Patriots and was the daughter of the former mayor of San Francisco. A political moderate, Alioto lacked Washington experience. Tsongas’s most formidable foe did not enter until June 8, after stories began to circulate about Brooke’s

⁵² Washington Post, 17 May 1978; “The War in Eritrea,” *The MacNeil Lehrer Report*, 17 May 1978.

divorce and possible weakness as the subject of an ethics probe. Secretary of State Paul Guzzi enjoyed substantial name recognition and quickly became the favorite. But an automobile accident soon hampered Guzzi's early efforts. Still, as Guzzi recovered, he formed a plan to beat Tsongas and Alioto.⁵³

Guzzi had earlier assured Tsongas that he would not run, and when he changed his mind on the heels of Brooke's troubles, Tsongas and many in the press viewed him as opportunistic. Tsongas was "visibly angry," but never used the issue of opportunism against Guzzi in the campaign. He also never accused Guzzi of breaking his word, shrugging off reporters' questions about Guzzi's integrity. On June 11, at the urging of Doris Kanin, the mother of Tsongas's chief administrative aide Dennis Kanin, the liberal political organization CPPAX (Citizens for Participation in Political Action) asked Guzzi not to run. Guzzi's support dropped substantially when the letter became public later that month.⁵⁴

As in previous campaigns, the Tsongas media effort relied upon the talents of Fred Faust, who recruited Fred Woods and Lew Barlow to assist with television advertisements. They worried that they wouldn't be able to raise enough money for later in the campaign, but remembered that fundraising became much easier after the primaries when the candidate looked more viable. They decided to air television ads before others started their media campaigns, and they searched frantically for a way to differentiate Tsongas from Guzzi. The answer that emerged from mid-June strategizing in an apartment on Beacon Hill seemed obvious in retrospect. They decided to use the odd spelling of Tsongas's name. The media

⁵³ Washington Post, 17, 22, 31 May 1978; Boston Herald American, 19 September 1978, 29 January 1979.

⁵⁴ Patrick D'Addario interview 24 ("visibly") September 2003; Boston Herald American, 29 January 1979.

team put together a thirty-second television spot that catapulted Tsongas into statewide recognition.⁵⁵

Faust knew that they needed to make people like Tsongas, but that most would never have a chance to meet him in person. He knew it would help if they could get a really good smile out of him, but Tsongas had a very dry sense of humor. Although he joked frequently, he rarely smiled or laughed. Tsongas's initial taping efforts seemed fake, and Faust told him so. Tsongas told Faust to make him laugh, so Faust told him jokes, but none seemed to work. Faust began to throw small rocks at Tsongas to make him smile. After a while Faust only had to fake throwing motions until they got the shot they wanted—a genuine, honest smile. The film technician, who had never met Tsongas, said, “What a smile . . . I like that guy.” In the ad, a voice-over discusses Tsongas's congressional accomplishments, at one point showing Tsongas standing in front of a Lowell construction project he helped bring together, while four people attempt, unsuccessfully, to pronounce his surname, printed on a sign next to the camera. In the last case, a child from Tsongas's Lowell neighborhood offers a couple of mispronunciations before enthusiastically and authoritatively articulating, “Tickets.” The advertisement ended with a still shot of Tsongas smiling. The “Tickets” ad seemed to strike a chord with the public. The day after it first aired in Massachusetts, Tsongas participated in a parade in Springfield. He and his supporters were treated to people in the crowd shouting, “There's Tickets.” Tsongas's team knew they had a winner.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ *Boston Herald American*, 29 January 1979; Transcript of Mehmed Ali's interview of Richard Arenberg, 15 May 2003, and Fred Faust, 13 February 2003 (qtns.), CLH; Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003.

⁵⁶ *Boston Herald American*, 29 January 1979; transcript of Mehmed Ali's interview of Richard Arenberg, 15 May 2003, and Fred Faust 13 February 2003, CLH; Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003.

The other campaign television advertisement touted Tsongas's congressional accomplishments more seriously. Tsongas wanted to discuss energy, a complicated subject for a thirty-second spot. He wanted to relate energy to children, and also make it understandable. In the ad Tsongas sits with his daughter Ashley while she plays with a dollhouse. He picks up a small solar cell and discusses the need to conserve energy for future generations. The two ads worked well together, tying name recognition to local accomplishments and support for alternative energy.⁵⁷

On the night after Tsongas announced, twenty-five of his biggest supporters met with him and his fundraiser Nick Rizzo at the Andover Inn. Each contributed \$1,000, which provided the initial boost that Tsongas needed to run the television ads early. Two of the supporters were wealthy Greek-Americans, Louis Kolofolios and Charles Maliotis of Belmont. Tsongas and Rizzo had built national and local lists of Greek-Americans to ask for support, and about one-fifth of the money eventually raised for the campaign came from them. "Tip" O'Neill helped them raise money nationally, as did his son Christopher, a Washington attorney. About 75 percent of the \$900,000 eventually raised for the campaign came from within the state. Tsongas, happily, rarely had to raise money himself, although he attended some fundraising events. Rizzo raised money mostly from his office in Lawrence, and Kanin and Arenberg ran the campaign from Washington, leaving Tsongas free, in Rizzo's words, "to be the candidate." In mid-August, Rizzo grabbed Tsongas and,

⁵⁷ Boston Herald American, 29 January 1979; Transcript of Mehmed Ali's interview of Fred Faust, 13 February 2003, CLH; Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003.

according to Rizzo, “hit every Greek restaurant owner between the Cape and the North Shore.”⁵⁸

Tsongas did not enjoy the long days spent campaigning, away from his family, or the financial worries. The Tsongases had to use their home as collateral for a \$50,000 line of credit to continue the campaign in September. He felt so much stress and worry that he feared the campaign was endangering his family’s future. He called a meeting with Kanin and the two decided to cut back a little on spending. He also worried about the divisiveness of the primary race, especially since he and Guzzi had to split the liberal votes. After a debate taped on September 9, Tsongas approached Guzzi in a parking lot, and the two shared their misery, discussing the effect the race was having on their families. The next week Tsongas heard that Guzzi intended to run ads attacking him for spending little time in Washington during the campaign. Tsongas worried that, with less than a week before the primary election, he would not have time to defend himself. On September 14, he called Guzzi. Guzzi returned the call from a payphone, but found that he didn’t have the seventy cents he needed to deposit. Tsongas asked the operator to put the call through anyway for the two senatorial candidates. “I’m Paul Guzzi,” said Guzzi. Tsongas said, “I’m Paul Tsongas.” The operator wished them both luck and let them have their conversation. Tsongas told Guzzi that he thought a last-minute attack would be unfair. Guzzi replied that he wouldn’t run the ads, saying, “Some of my people were urging me to go after you, but I had made up my mind not to do it.” With two days to go before the primary, most polls gave Tsongas the lead, partially due to his better facility with national issues, partially because of the television ad campaign. The race was close, and Tsongas did not know whether he

⁵⁸ Boston Globe, 26 October 1978 (“to,” “hit”); Boston Herald American, 29 January 1979.

had won, even the next morning, as he thanked his supporters. Early returns showed a large Tsongas lead. All night as precinct workers tallied the votes, Guzzi narrowed the gap, but never enough. After the primary, Tsongas took a week off, then began to campaign in earnest against Brooke.⁵⁹

The Senate Ethics Committee's investigations had begun to take their toll on Brooke. A week before the primary a source close to the committee leaked an opinion to Globe reporters that Brooke was stalling and speculated that his records would not be available until after the primary. Brooke's opponent in the Republican primary, Avi Nelson, a radio and television talk show host and columnist for the Boston Herald American, challenged the Senator from the right, concentrating on his liberal voting record, particularly his votes for the Panama Canal Treaty and to protect federal funding for abortions. Nelson had gained attention via his attacks in the Herald on court-ordered busing in Boston. The close race called for new strategies, and both Republican candidates began a concerted attempt to get Democrats to register Republican for the primary vote. Brooke did so to gain support from predominantly black wards, while Nelson attempted to gain Democratic support in Boston's anti-busing strongholds. During the summer the state of Massachusetts also began an investigation into Brooke's finances, after a team of Boston Globe reporters unearthed new revelations. Brooke barely won the primary, but he and Nelson had managed to skew the primary race for the Democrats, many of whom voted in the GOP primary. Nobody knew how the shifting alliances would settle before the general election in November.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Washington Post, 17 September 1978; Boston Herald American, 29 January 1979 (qtns.).

⁶⁰ Lowell Sun, 15 September 1978; Worcester Evening Gazette, 15 September 1978; Time, 2 October 1978; Boston Herald American, 29 January 1979.

Some prominent Democrats rushed to support Tsongas. Representatives Morris Udall, Michael Harrington, and Robert Drinan, as well as Secretary of State Guzzi, began showing up at Tsongas fundraisers. Lillian Carter, the President's mother, campaigned for him in Lawrence and Lowell. Most important of all, Tsongas met with Ted Kennedy, who agreed to sponsor a fund-raiser for Tsongas, to endorse him in a television commercial, and to campaign with him on Boston's South Shore, where Tsongas's primary returns were the weakest. Tsongas hoped that the President might assist him as well.⁶¹

Brooke's strategy against Tsongas was to argue that the small differences between the two men were insufficient reason for changing senators. "What's the reason for a change when you've already got performance?" Brooke asked. Although he put out a glossy brochure emphasizing one hundred of his achievements over his twelve years in office, he encountered difficulties running on his Senate record. While he had done solid and consistent work, he could point to few concrete achievements. Brooke had served on Appropriations, a powerful and important committee, as well as Banking and Urban Affairs. From neither of these, however, could he point to buildings or specific legislative accomplishments that were as easy to understand as a national park. And although Brooke championed civil rights, he did so carefully and quietly. He was cautious and a conciliator, not a rabble-rouser. His understated style limited his appeal to some groups. And with only a month to go before the election, major newspapers carried new allegations about Brooke's finances on a daily basis.⁶²

⁶¹ Boston Globe, Boston Herald American, Lowell Sun, 3 October 1978.

⁶² Boston Globe, 3 October 1978; Lowell Sun, 4 October 1978.

Although the allegations against Brooke were never serious, they were complicated, and they made people wonder about what Brooke was hiding. He had somehow made personal use of his mother-in-law's \$100,000 insurance settlement and failed to report a \$38,000 loan on public disclosure forms. His ex-wife Remigia filed suit against him for failure to make timely alimony payments and transfer property to her as their divorce settlement required. Then the Senate Ethics Committee announced that it would not be able to conclude its investigation until after the election, primarily because it had not yet been able to get Brooke's records. Some began to question the integrity of the Senate Ethics Committee itself. Adlai Stevenson III (D-IL), the chair of the committee, was himself concerned about this perception, but he added that he did not want to influence the election's outcome. Soon afterward, Richard J. Wertheimer, the special counsel charged with investigating Brooke, resigned. Many interpreted Wertheimer's resignation letter as a rebuke against Brooke. The next day, in an impassioned twenty-three minute speech on the Senate floor, Brooke demanded a hearing to clear his name. The panel met to discuss Brooke's situation and decided to allow him to confront Wertheimer on October 23. The head of the Washington office of the NAACP joined the president of the National Organization of Women and others to call Wertheimer's assertions "McCarthyist."⁶³

Tsongas avoided questions about Brooke's tribulations at the hands of the Ethics Committee and the press. Brooke inadvertently helped Tsongas's cause by not handling the allegations well. Soon after his speech on the Senate floor he retracted his call for a confrontation with Wertheimer, believing that an Ethics subcommittee had cleared him of dilatory tactics. The Ethics Committee had not formally done so, however, and Senator

⁶³ Boston Globe, 8, 10, 14, October 1978; Boston Herald American, 10, 19 October 1978; Lowell Sun, 11, 12, 18 October 1978.

Stevenson told him so. Polls now showed Brooke behind Tsongas by eight to fifteen points. As Brooke campaigned, he encountered more bad luck. A list of campaign donors published just before the Wertheimer fiasco showed a \$3,000 donation from an ex-convict in the Pittsburgh underworld. Later, while Brooke spoke in a stadium surrounded by students protesting the building's financing by a South African mining interest, Tsongas noted his opponent's lack of support for economic sanctions against South Africa. Brooke expected a campaign boost from Ronald Reagan the next week, but even that fell through.⁶⁴

Although Brooke's situation looked increasingly dire, Democratic support for the Republican emerged. On October 12, State Representative Barney Frank and Edward Lashman, chair of the state Housing Finance Agency, appealed to voters to support Brooke. They lauded Brooke's support for social justice and "sensible housing." Frank also voiced concern that, "unless Brooke is in the U.S. Senate, there are 20 million black Americans who would not be otherwise represented." Frank candidly admitted, however, that he disagreed with Brooke on many points, including national health insurance, an issue on which he sided with Tsongas. Joining Frank and Lashman in endorsing Brooke were a number of state representatives, labor officials, the state coordinator of the National Organization for Women, the chair of the Massachusetts National Women's Conference, and professors at local universities. So did Americans for Democratic Action, which sent a letter to several thousand of its Massachusetts members.⁶⁵

When the Senate Ethics panel allowed Brooke to confront Wertheimer, the Senator appeared to achieve a measure of victory. The panel found that he had done nothing to

⁶⁴ Lowell Sun, 21 October 1978; Boston Globe, 21, 22 October 1978; Boston Herald American, 25 October 1978.

⁶⁵ Lowell Sun, 12 October 1978; Quincy Patriot Ledger, 13 October 1978; Lynn Sunday Post, 15 October 1978.

hinder its probe and, attributed the delays to his overzealous and “combative” attorneys. Although Wertheimer released a fifty-four page document to the Ethics Committee outlining the delaying tactics, prompting more outrage from Brooke, Wertheimer’s complaints blamed the Ethics Committee for the delays. When the Ethics Committee insisted that its investigation would continue after the election, it further dampened Brooke’s small triumph.⁶⁶

Both candidates were exhausted by the time of the first debate on October 26. Tsongas, convinced that Brooke was going to be very difficult to beat, prepared frantically, in hopes of fighting Brooke to a draw. The Tsongas campaign team held a dress rehearsal on October 22, asking questions that the panelists might ask. Tsongas believed that his answers were too vague because he had not had enough time to read the briefing papers. Two days later they tried again, but he remained unsatisfied and fatigued from the campaign schedule. He fretted that the facts just wouldn’t stay in his mind. The night before the debate, he cancelled all other appearances and sequestered himself in his hotel room alone, preparing outlines from his highlighted briefing book. On the drive to Boston, he wrote his opening and closing remarks. His staff held another brief rehearsal, but Tsongas remained alone with his thoughts for most of the day. The day of rest and solitude allowed him to recover his energy after rigorous campaigning, and he found himself able to think, instead of merely react. His opponent had spent the day before the debate facing questions from the Senate Ethics Committee.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Boston Globe, 25 October 1978.

⁶⁷ Boston Herald American, 29 January 1979.

On the night of October 26, Brooke and Tsongas headed through wind and rain to the television studios of WWLP, located on the top of Mount Provin, about one hundred miles west of Boston. Ahead of the two candidates, Tsongas's staff and supporters carpoled up the leaf-strewn, rain-slicked mountain road to stage a show of support. When Brooke emerged from the dressing room, he found the studio halls packed with Tsongas supporters holding signs and balloons and wearing campaign hats. Tsongas's supporters cleared a path for the senator. As Brooke approached the end of the hall, he turned back before entering the studio and said, "I just want to say, you people work for a hell of a man." The candidates debated politely and with inconclusive results. Tsongas focused on the messages that he wanted to convey to the viewers in western Massachusetts who would see only the one debate—Brooke had closed his western Massachusetts office; he was inaccessible. Brooke characterized voters as colorblind, but nonetheless attempted a few racial appeals. At one point he said, "I'm sure that every black child looks up and says, 'if Ed Brooke can make it, I can make it.'" At another point he likened his experience at the hands of the Senate Ethics Committee to a scene right out of Uncle Tom's Cabin: "running through the woods, the hounds were yelping and the posse was behind me and I didn't know why." Brooke also ineffectively countered Tsongas's attacks on Apartheid and knowledge about Africa by telling Tsongas, "If you lose, I'm sure your friend President Carter will appoint you ambassador to Africa." Tsongas wanted to believe that voters would be colorblind, too, and told viewers that he hoped Massachusetts had "evolved to a point where we can judge people totally on . . . issues." The candidates talked about the issues, but there they mostly agreed. They complimented each other's work several times. After the debate, while Tsongas waited in the rain under an awning, Brooke approached him and took Tsongas's

right hand in both of his. “Thanks, Paul,” he said. “That was a good debate. I really mean that.” Surprised, Tsongas answered, “See you in the morning.” Brooke looked puzzled and then recalled their scheduled meeting in Boston for a question-and-answer session in front of high school journalism students. Brooke said, “My God, we don’t get any rest, do we? Why don’t we stop?” Tsongas did not laugh, but offered, “I will if you will.”⁶⁸

Two days after the debate, Carter came reluctantly to Massachusetts to campaign for Democratic candidates. Tsongas rode in the presidential limousine to a rally in Lynn, where Carter lauded his candidacy. Brooke and his opponent had pulled a significant number of Democrats into the Republican primary, which affected the results of the gubernatorial race, allowing a conservative Democrat, Edward King, to emerge as the candidate, and ousting the sitting governor, Michael Dukakis. Carter wanted to support Thomas P. O’Neill, the candidate for lieutenant governor, but he did not want to support Edward King. So he avoided mentioning either King or O’Neill by name, which made Tsongas stand out even more. King’s opponent expected a boost from Ronald Reagan, but Reagan cancelled at the last minute, citing divisions and problems within Massachusetts’ Republican party.⁶⁹

Although most people later called the three Brooke-Tsongas debates a draw, Tsongas scored two critical points where they appeared to disagree. First, he questioned Brooke’s opposition to the Kennedy-Corman health care bill, noting that the Black Congressional Caucus supported the measure. Brooke later claimed that he supported a comprehensive health care bill, but that Kennedy-Corman did not have enough votes to pass. Tsongas used Kennedy-Corman several times over the course of the campaign’s final week in hopes that

⁶⁸ Qtns. in Boston Globe, 27-28 October 1978; Boston Herald American, 29 January 1979; Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003 (“I just”).

⁶⁹ Boston Globe, 25 October 1978.

Brooke's liberal supporters would ask themselves about Brooke's lack of support. Probably his constant references to the bill helped him most by reminding voters that Senator Kennedy supported him. Tsongas also took Brooke to task for his support of the neutron bomb, a tactic which may have especially helped him in the final week. Massachusetts voters opposed the neutron bomb by a substantial margin. After Tsongas and Brooke had sparred several times, Brooke either changed his position on the neutron bomb or discovered that he had only claimed to support it. At a League of Women Voters candidate night on November 2, Brooke claimed that he had voiced support in hopes that the President could "use it as a bargaining chip against the Soviet Union." Brooke had, in fact, claimed to support the bomb several times, in writing. His own campaign manager often had pointed to Brooke's support of the controversial weapon as a key difference between the two candidates.⁷⁰

Credibility differentiated the candidates even more than the issues. When pollsters asked which candidate had been "honest and above-board in his personal affairs," Massachusetts voters overwhelmingly chose Tsongas. When asked which of the two had not been honest and above-board in his personal affairs, 50 percent chose Brooke. Only 2 percent chose Tsongas. Tsongas's honesty and candor carried directly into his public conduct. In the final televised debate, just a couple of days after Carter's visit and endorsement, Tsongas characterized the administration's energy bill in unfavorable terms, claiming that the administration had settled for "the moral equivalent of strawberry shortcake," not "the moral equivalent of war." Critics sometimes referred to Carter's energy bill by an acronym of "moral equivalent of war," M.E.O.W. Tsongas's phrase, which

⁷⁰ Boston Globe, 27 October 1978 ("use"); Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003.

characterized the bill as a tasty dessert treat for oil and gas companies, shortened to the acronym “M.E.S.S.”⁷¹

On November 7, Tsongas won with about 56 percent of the vote, spread fairly evenly across the state. The victory was bittersweet, however. Tsongas respected his opponent and had voted for Brooke in the previous two Senate races. Almost every black leader in Massachusetts and the rest of the country, including the Reverend Jesse Jackson and Coretta Scott King, had endorsed his opponent, and Tsongas could understand such support. Brooke’s supporters often hailed him as a “national resource” during the campaign, after Henry Kissinger called him that. But Brooke had received the wrong kind of attention from the media, and the wrong kind of help from the Senate Ethics Committee. Tsongas told reporters he thought that Brooke might have won with another week of campaigning. The newly elected senator worried that his victory attested less to his own appeal than to voters’ opposition to Brooke. The day after the election he greeted voters in a subway station in Boston, then raced back to Lowell for breakfast at Tatsios, a Tsongas campaign tradition. He asked Rich Arenberg to create a survey to determine whether Brooke had lost or Tsongas had won. A couple of days later he headed to Washington to lobby Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd for a seat on the Foreign Affairs and Energy and Natural Resources Committees. He wanted to make a difference in U.S. foreign policy, particularly in Africa. He also wanted to make a stronger impact on energy policy and conservation. And he knew a great deal about national resources.⁷²

⁷¹ Boston Globe, 30 October 3 November 1978 (“the moral”).

⁷² Boston Globe, 29 October 1978; 1-10 November 1978; Tsongas press release, 5 December 1978, Box 167D, TC.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CONSERVATION BATTLES OF 1979

Traditionally a senator's maiden speech—his or her first from the Senate floor—symbolizes the end of an apprenticeship and the beginning of a more egalitarian relationship with colleagues. It can also delineate the issues about which a senator feels most passionately. In January 1979, after attending a briefing on Iranian oil production, Senator Paul Tsongas decided to address his colleagues for the first time on the energy crisis. He outlined his address to legislative aide Mitch Tyson, who prepared a first draft. Speechwriter Alice Lynn Booth wrote the second and third drafts. Tsongas planned to deliver the speech on February 8. On February 6, while discussing upcoming legislation with chief legislative aide Richard Arenberg, an intercom, tuned to the action on the Senate floor relayed a discussion about Angola. Increasingly distracted, Tsongas finally said, "I know more about this than they do," and walked briskly to the Senate chamber, where he began discussing African relations. Suddenly, the senior senator from Massachusetts, Ted Kennedy, charged through the chamber's swinging doors and down to the floor, upset about failing in his responsibility to introduce his new colleague on what Kennedy thought was the occasion of Tsongas's maiden speech.¹

Two days later, at exactly 1 P.M., Tsongas began his "official" maiden speech. Sticking closely to the prepared text, he warned the almost totally empty room about what he called the "fourth energy crisis." He castigated President Jimmy Carter for not addressing energy issues in the State of the Union address. Tsongas called the "fourth energy crisis" the

¹ Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003.

“nation’s greatest threat and greatest test.” He warned that an assassination in Saudi Arabia could cut off one-third of U.S. oil supply. He cautioned that inattention to the building crisis would lead to the return of gasoline lines, heating oil shortages, and rapid price inflation and would result in a new “bureaucratic nightmare”—gasoline rationing. Calling the government response to the energy crisis since 1973 a “dismal failure,” he pleaded for a renewed commitment to the development of alternative energy sources, the creation of regional petroleum reserves, and new programs to assist the elderly and low-income families with weatherization efforts. Above all, he called for renewed attention to educating the public about energy policy and increasing citizens’ involvement in the policy process. “How can the public deal with the crisis without understanding and participating in energy policy making?” he asked. During the nine minutes Tsongas spoke, Senator William Proxmire (D-WI) drifted into the chamber and then left, as did Harry Byrd, (Independent, VA)—both without listening. Senator Kennedy called the speech an “auspicious beginning.” Kennedy probably did not intend to be ironic.²

The speech foreshadowed the difficulty Tsongas would experience through much of the year in promoting energy conservation. He scrambled to be seated in committees where he could bring his talents to bear—Energy and Natural Resources and Foreign Affairs. Having only succeeded in being placed on Energy and Natural Resources, he nonetheless attempted to make a difference in African policy through his newfound visibility as a senator. Throughout the year he pursued a variety of different tactics promoting his

² Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003 (“I know”); Senator Paul E. Tsongas, “Maiden Speech,” 8 February 1979, Box 2D, Tsongas Collection, University of Massachusetts Lowell Center for Lowell History (TC, hereafter) (“fourth,” “nation’s,” “bureaucratic,” “dismal,” “how”); Lowell Sun, 9 (“auspicious”) February 1979, Washington Post, 9 February 1979. The prior three energy crises the title of his speech denoted include the oil embargo of 1973-1974, the natural gas shortages of 1976-1977, and the coal strike of 1977.

message of energy conservation. He first directed his message to the President, believing that Jimmy Carter's leadership could make a crucial difference. When Carter moved too slowly, Tsongas threatened to run against him in the Massachusetts Democratic primary. After the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island in late March 1979, Tsongas's support for nuclear power became even more uncomfortable for him. He worked to convince his constituents to support conservation measures and to educate them, but realized that voluntary measures had little effect. His efforts to pass legislation for conservation and renewable energy development met with success, but he wanted to accomplish more. His new visibility allowed him to threaten public utilities with support for the resurgent anti-nuclear movement. The tactic eventually worked, since the utilities could save money through championing conservation initiatives. Just as his legislative agenda began to gain momentum in the Senate and as new conservation initiatives looked likely to pass, however, the struggling automobile industry threatened fuel efficiency standards—which Tsongas saw as an important conservation measure. Tsongas worked hard to save the Chrysler Corporation from bankruptcy in such a way that would preserve fuel efficiency regulations.³

Tsongas was convinced at the start of his first Senate term that a new energy crisis had already begun. By the end of 1978, revolutionary political and economic disruptions had halted Iran's oil exports to the United States. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) subsequently raised oil prices by nearly 15 percent. Tsongas viewed the

³ Hedrick Smith, *The Power Game: How Washington Works* (New York: Random House, 1988), 126-128. Smith quotes Tsongas extensively in a cautionary tale about the importance of visibility. Tsongas probably did not forget Smith's "Rule 1: visibility at all costs," at least not at the time Smith alleges. It is difficult to tell whether Smith misquotes Tsongas or whether Tsongas misremembered his first year in the Senate. Regardless, Smith certainly erred in placing Tsongas in the Foreign Relations Committee his first Senate year. That appointment came in May 1980, after a year and one-half in the Senate. Smith is correct that Tsongas placed a great deal of importance in visibility. However, with the exception of his 1978 political advertisement, Tsongas did not seem willing to sacrifice content for visibility. Moreover, Tsongas vied for media attention soon after his electoral victory, striving to break free from Kennedy's long shadow.

increasingly dire situation as an opportunity to champion important energy legislation focusing heavily on renewable sources and conservation. But many obstacles remained to passing such legislation. The Carter Administration believed firmly in a balanced budget, which restricted the possibility of large expenditures on any problem. Moreover, Carter's interest in energy policy had suddenly waned. Earlier, just before the November elections, the President had signed a huge package of bills, representing an enormous effort from the executive and legislative branches of government to resolve the nation's most pressing energy issues. Afterward, the President sensed that the public had grown weary of energy problems. Many citizens seemed in fact to suspect that oil companies had originated the "energy crisis" to gain higher profits. Carter also knew that signing the bills into law had, in effect, closed the books on the crisis. To continue to call for public support to address energy issues would seem to be asserting that the administration had not effectively addressed energy policy during its first two years. Carter also wanted to concentrate on other pressing issues and prepare for his reelection campaign. The President's State of the Union address thus barely addressed energy. One sentence of the speech, buried in a discussion of inflation, urged Congress to "take other anti-inflation actions," including actions "to conserve energy, to increase production and to speed development of solar power"⁴

To champion energy issues effectively, Tsongas believed that he needed to gain a seat on the Senate's Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. He also hoped for a seat on

⁴ Franklin Tugwell, The Energy Crisis and the American Political Economy: Politics and Markets in the Management of Natural Resources (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988); Carter cited in Joseph A. Yager, "The Energy Battles of 1979" in Crawford Goodwin (Ed.), Energy Policy in Perspective (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 1981).

the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee, but the Senate's process for choosing committee assignments differed from that of the House of Representatives. In the House, Tsongas had simply told Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill, then majority leader, his preferences. In the Senate, the Democratic steering and policy committee voted to determine assignments. Tsongas made five trips to Washington in the two months after the election to meet with Senate Majority Leader Robert C. Byrd (D-VA) and almost every other committee member. In the half-hour-long meetings Tsongas introduced himself and mostly discussed his experiences in the House, concluding with a five minute conversation about committee assignments.

Tsongas soon heard from Energy and Natural Resources Committee chair Henry "Scoop" Jackson (D-WA) that Jackson favored an appointment from an energy-producing state, which excluded Massachusetts. So Tsongas spent much of his time lobbying for a seat on Foreign Relations. Foreign affairs had been one of the proximal reasons he sought Edward Brooke's seat in the first place, and Tsongas believed himself uniquely qualified, in some respects, for such a position. He had served in Ethiopia in the Peace Corps and had traveled there in the winter of 1977-78 to meet with Haile Miriam Mengistu, helping to solidify President Carter's African policy. Additionally, Tsongas reasoned that the departure of Senator Dick Clark of Iowa had left the Senate without an Africa expert. Tsongas may have also hoped that foreign policy involvement in African causes would help him to repair the goodwill of blacks who resented his victory over Brooke, the only black U.S. senator.

Several committee members assured Tsongas of their support, despite the fact that Senator Byrd had promised the next open seat to Edward Zorinsky (D-NE). By the end of December, Tsongas felt assured of a place. Thinking that it would be "impossible" to claim a seat on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Tsongas reconciled himself to his

third choice, the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, but had to work even for his appointment there. Senator James Abourezk (D-SD) wanted Tsongas to chair the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs so that he could step down as its chair and join another committee. The Indian Affairs committee came with a budget of \$621,000 and its own staff. Noting favorably Tsongas's work on the Alaska Lands Act in the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, the committee's staff saw Tsongas as a man with "the same interests as Abourezk" with a genuine concern for Indian rights issues. But Tsongas viewed the committee chairmanship as unattractive, nor was he alone in that respect. Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH), the committee's next most senior member, wanted another assignment. Next in line for the chair, Senator John Melcher (D-MT), had never taken an active role in committee affairs. Tsongas thus avoided Abourezk and his staff and pursued his top three choices.⁵

On January 15, Senator Jackson called Tsongas at home and told him that he wanted Tsongas on Energy and Natural resources. Tsongas was elated, thinking he might get both of his two top choices. But later that day a staff member brought rumors of a "complication" in the Foreign Relations assignment. On January 17, the Steering and Policy Committee voted 14-9-1 in favor of Zorinsky for the Foreign Relations seat. Tsongas was disappointed in the "last-minute politicking" that kept him off the committee but asked for priority for the next open seat. That night Tsongas left the office to speak to a gathering of officials of the United Auto Workers (UAW). The UAW had pledged \$5,000 to his campaign committee just before the November election, and he wanted to thank them in person. Walking through the lobby of the Russell Senate Building he ran into Scoop

⁵ Lowell Sun, 16 January 1979; Lawrence Eagle Tribune, 17 January 1979 ("impossible"); National Journal, 3 February 1979 ("the same").

Jackson, who reaffirmed his support of Tsongas for his committee, but also cautioned that senior members could still displace him. Almost all of the senators were senior to Tsongas, but he felt encouraged, nonetheless. The next day, the Steering and Policy Committee unanimously elected Tsongas to a seat on Energy and Natural resources and to the Banking committee as well. Tsongas told reporters that he might consider a third minor committee assignment, like Indian affairs, but he would not pursue it. He felt lucky to get two of his top three choices.⁶

On January 18, Edward Kennedy escorted Tsongas to the front of the Senate and Vice President Walter Mondale swore him in. More than twenty of Tsongas's relatives watched from the gallery. As Tsongas took the oath of office, his daughters, one-year-old Katina and four-year-old Ashley, dressed in red velvet pinafores, shouted "Daddy" from the gallery. Senate security officers more than once asked Tsongas's wife Niki to quiet the children, but she had her hands full. At one point Katina knocked her mother's contact lens out, but not wanting to miss the ceremony, Niki chose to watch with her one good eye. Tsongas pledged to bring a "generational perspective" to the Senate. The United Nations had designated 1979 the International Year of the Child, an occurrence which he had taken as "a sign." He also pledged to continue to work towards energy independence, for increased energy conservation, for world peace, and against nuclear proliferation. Tsongas also told those present that he wanted people to remember him for his work for cities.⁷

⁶ Lowell Sun, 16, 21 January 1979; New York Times, Boston Globe, Lawrence Eagle Tribune, 17 January 1979; Haverhill Gazette, Greek Sunday News 18 January 1979; National Journal, 3 February 1979 ("complication," "last"); Worcester Telegram, 5 February 1979 ("pretend"); Quincy Patriot Ledger, 6 March 1979 ("didn't").

⁷ Lowell Sun, 16, 21 January 1979; Greek Sunday News, 18 January 1979 ("Daddy"); Lawrence Eagle Tribune, 18 January 1979 ("a sign").

Although he had run all of his previous campaigns—for Lowell City Council, the Middlesex County Commission, and the House of Representatives—as a reformer, he saw the Senate differently. Wanting “to be credible,” he vowed to spend his time learning its ways. His battle for his committee assignments made him realize that he “didn’t have Tip O’Neill to put his big arm around” him anymore, he said. But he found it difficult to follow patiently the Senate’s formal, and often unwritten, rules. And the Senate offered more freedom in ways that seemed to invite conflict with Kennedy and others. Committee assignments were not as confining in the upper house, allowing him to participate more broadly in policymaking. He loved to learn new things, and shortly after his inauguration he initiated a series of roundtable discussions among Boston area experts in a variety of fields, loosely based upon the Senate committee structure. The first discussion group focused on health care, Kennedy’s specialty, which Tsongas knew little about. He planned to put together a group to study foreign affairs, particularly issues affecting Africa. He decided to “pretend” that he had been placed on the Foreign Relations Committee, and wanted to become an expert on African opposition leaders. He believed that Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini’s rise to power would have been foreseeable if another senator had taken the time to study Iran’s opposition movements. Tsongas planned a number of other discussions, noting that it would be some time before he put together a group to discuss energy. Tsongas needed little advice on energy matters.⁸

Tsongas already considered himself the foremost energy expert in the Senate when he walked to the Senate chambers to deliver his maiden speech. He paused to talk to reporters

⁸ Lowell Sun, 16, 21 January 1979 (“to be,” “didn’t”); New York Times, Boston Globe; Lawrence Eagle Tribune, 17 January 1979; Haverhill Gazette, Greek Sunday News, 18 January 1979; Worcester Telegram, 5 February 1979 (“pretend”); Quincy Patriot Ledger, 6 March 1979.

before entering the chamber and hearkened back to the maiden speeches of senators past. Tsongas told reporters that the moral urgency of Vietnam and the civil rights movement, the subjects of Brooke's and Kennedy's respective maiden speeches, would soon accompany efforts to conserve energy and develop renewable energy sources. He supposed people would not remember him as one of those in the forefront of such efforts. But in five years, he declared, citizens would not be able "to find anyone who wasn't in favor of strong moves to deal with the energy problem in 1979." Noting Kennedy's daily appearances in the Boston Globe and national papers, Tsongas said that he hoped to command some publicity to champion his own causes, chiefly conservation and alternative energy development. He jokingly told reporters that he had alerted Kennedy to the speech and added that he had asked Kennedy to "kindly stop a few days" so that Tsongas might get some attention himself.⁹

Tsongas's speech seemed to have little effect on the President, although Carter formed a task force to plan the next steps for his administration's energy policy, and Energy Secretary James Schlesinger warned that the situation might become more serious than the embargo of 1973-1974. But Tsongas wanted more action and feared the construction of another energy plan without congressional input. He planned to announce his own energy strategy, which would include alternative energy research, conservation measures, and the prohibition of automobiles below a certain level of miles-per-gallon efficiency rating. By the middle of March, the Department of Energy had come under widespread editorial criticism from business publications. As the Secretary of Energy and the architect of NEP, Schlesinger bore the brunt of the attacks. A group of senators called for his resignation.

⁹ Boston Globe, 9 February 1979.

Metzenbaum, the group's leader, charged Schlesinger with "single-minded devotion" to higher energy prices. Tsongas disagreed and used the Senate debate about Schlesinger as an opportunity to call for renewed attention to conservation and renewable energy source research and development. He blamed Congress for diluting Carter's initial energy plan. He blamed the media and educational institutions for not focusing more attention on the issues. Then he turned his attention to the private sector. He pointed out that fuel efficiency bills had been before Congress during the first two years of Carter's term, but that "the major automobile companies and the UAW . . . lobbied against" the bills repeatedly. He also blamed the American people. Then he took aim once again at the President, listing twenty-three examples of Carter's lack of leadership on energy initiatives.¹⁰

Tsongas soon heard encouraging news: Carter was calling his closest advisors to meet at Camp David on March 19 to announce a new energy plan. But congressional sources expected the President to propose the decontrol of domestic oil prices and to de-emphasize conservation and alternative energy sources, which was not what Tsongas wanted. Carter viewed decontrol as the keystone of a "second phase" of energy measures that he had begun two years earlier. He considered the gradual decontrol of energy prices as "too important to be avoided" because price controls kept energy prices artificially low, thus encouraging waste. Carter also believed that artificially low oil prices restrained the development of alternative energy like synthetic fuels and solar power. Later that month, Tsongas told

¹⁰ Energy: Fiscal Year 1980 Budget Request, Hearing before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources (Government Printing Office, 1979); John C. Barrow, "The Quest for a National Energy Policy" in The Carter Presidency: Policy Choices in the Post-New Deal Era (Lawrence: The University of Kansas Press, 1998); Boston Herald American, 9 February 1979; Lowell Sun, 11 February 1979; James L. Cochrane, "Carter Energy Policy and the Ninety-fifth Congress," in Crawford Goodwin, Ed., Energy Policy in Perspective (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 1981); Boston Herald American, 18 February 1979; Congressional Record, 14 March 1979 ("the major"), S1230-1243; New York Times, 15 March 1979 ("single"); Springfield Morning Union, 19 March 1979; William J. Holland, "The Great Gamble: Jimmy Carter and the 1979 Energy Crisis," Prologue, Spring 1990, 63.

reporters that he would actively oppose Carter in the Democratic presidential primaries if Carter proposed decontrolling domestic oil prices. Massachusetts held its primary one week after New Hampshire's but carried substantially more delegates, making the state the first urban primary. Tsongas said that he would even consider, as a "last resort," entering the Massachusetts primary as a favorite son candidate who would release his delegates to Kennedy if Carter did poorly in the primaries. Chatter about a Kennedy candidacy had increased over the previous few months, particularly after Kennedy broke with tradition to support Tsongas's campaign against Edward Brooke. Many assumed that Tsongas would be responsible for continuing Kennedy's legacy in the Senate, freeing Kennedy for the Presidency. Senator John Durkin (D-NH) threatened to enter his state's primary race. When the Boston Globe reported Tsongas's statements, it failed to qualify his candidacy as a "last resort." Tsongas spent much of the following week talking with reporters from around the country and attempting to "resurrect some reasonableness on the issue." The flurry of media attention allowed him to clarify his view that Carter lacked a long-term energy policy and argue that decontrol would merely treat the symptoms of a larger problem. The next week in Iowa a group of labor leaders began a drive to elect Kennedy in that state's January precinct caucuses. Washington Star editorialists envisioned Carter attempting to campaign in the winter of 1979-1980, during a heating oil shortage, in frigid New England and Iowa.¹¹

The next week, Tsongas clarified his criticisms of Carter's energy policy in a speech for the Harvard Business School's Energy, Education and Conservation Conference. His staff eagerly anticipated this "major speech." At the conference, Tsongas characterized Carter's

¹¹ Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President (New York: Bantam Books, 1982), 107 ("second," "too"); New York Times, 22 March 1979; Boston Globe, 22 March 1979; Lowell Sun, 22 March 1979("resurrect"); Elizabeth Drew, Portrait of an Election: The 1980 Presidential Campaign (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981), 15; Washington Star, 26 March 1979.

response to the energy crisis as “the energy equivalent of Rodney Dangerfield,” asking the audience to picture the comedian in his familiar stance of “getting no respect, nervously straightening his Persian tie.” He partially blamed Carter himself for the nation’s reactive policies, because the President would sometimes assert that a crisis existed, but then pull back and not talk about the issue for months at a time. Tsongas nevertheless blamed “opposition lobbies” for killing the best parts of Carter’s 1977 Energy Plan. He cited a General Accounting Office study that expected oil prices to rise to \$18 per barrel by the end of 1979, creating 100,000 more unemployed workers and decreasing the gross national product by \$8.5 billion. The speech focused, in particular, upon Carter’s use of decontrol as a conservation strategy, which Tsongas termed a “short-term sacrifice that lacks a long-range vision of a healthier energy future.” He argued that Carter needed to create a more comprehensive conservation plan that invested a decontrol policy’s increased oil revenues in the commercialization of alternative energy sources and relief for the poor. He urged Carter at least to address the prevalent belief that a crisis did not exist.¹²

Carter temporarily postponed his energy address when, on March 28, an accident at the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, temporarily consumed all available media space. The accident itself, coupled with the coincidental appearance of The China Syndrome, a popular movie about a fictional dangerous nuclear accident, amplified public fears about nuclear power. The President—a nuclear engineer, who had often cited Admiral Hyman Rickover, architect of the U.S. nuclear submarine fleet, as one of his top three influences in life—had no such fears. Carter visited the reactor site

¹² Memorandum from Alice Booth to Dennis Kanin, 19 March 1979, Box 52A, TC; Paul E. Tsongas, “Remarks Prepared for Delivery at the Energy Education and Conservation Conference, Harvard Business School, March 26, 1979,” Box 41B, TC.

on April 1 and emerged convinced that the press and the public had exaggerated the incident's potential danger. He prepared to reassert the importance of nuclear power in the energy speech he planned for later that week, but his advisors warned that to do so would be political suicide in light of public anxieties, so he reconsidered. Briefing Tsongas and fifteen other congressmen upon returning from Harrisburg, Carter claimed that the new energy plan would probably include a decontrol provision, but that it would also capture some of the increased profits in a trust fund to promote alternative energy sources.¹³

Tsongas discussed the Three Mile Island accident with his chief legislative aide Richard Arenberg while monitoring non-stop press coverage. Arenberg believed that Tsongas needed to declare that the event had triggered a "total reevaluation" of his position on "the role of nuclear energy" and a full reevaluation of safety regulations and the role of nuclear energy in the future. Arenberg wondered if Tsongas should "formulate an energy policy which excludes nuclear power." At the least, Arenberg argued, Tsongas should "remain neutral" on the construction of Massachusetts's proposed Pilgrim II plant "until the NRC issues a construction permit." Arenberg advocated a moratorium on new plants until a "full-scale government reevaluation takes place," the suspension of plants under construction, and the possible shutdown of nuclear power, although he conceded that a shutdown might be impossible in New England. He urged Tsongas to be "extraordinarily careful" in his first statements about the incident. Mitch Tyson, even more alarmed by the events than Arenberg, argued that Tsongas should use the opportunity to push solar energy research and development and conservation efforts. "We have no conservation strategy yet," he argued. "The President should establish a National Conservation Congress" Nobody knew

¹³ Lowell Sun, 5 April 1979; Nuclear Report, 7 May 1979.

where to assign blame for the accident. As Tyson posed the quandary: “Either the industry is incapable of safely operating nuclear power plants, the NRC is incapable of regulating nuclear power, or scientists and engineers do not sufficiently understand nuclear engineering systems” Soon, Tsongas and his aides focused on Carter’s lack of leadership and the lack of administrative coordination between the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), the Department of Energy, and the private power companies.¹⁴

The Three Mile Island accident put Tsongas in a difficult position. Almost 40 percent of New England’s electrical power came from nuclear reactors. The week before, Tsongas had criticized the NRC for shutting down five reactors simultaneously for seismic stress modifications. He loathed the use of other energy resources that the shutdowns caused and pointed to the nuclear industry’s nearly spotless safety record. He had also pledged support for the construction of a second reactor on an existing site in Plymouth, Massachusetts, although he opposed a new reactor for Seabrook, New Hampshire. His 1978 hearings into Seabrook’s regulatory delays had convinced him that it was the worst site in New England for a nuclear reactor. Pilgrim II, however, would provide a needed alternative to coal power, which harmed the environment much more directly and had long-term environmental problems as well. Many of his constituents expressed feelings about nuclear power that ranged from skepticism to outright opposition. Few championed it. The Three Mile Island accident seemed to galvanize opposition. In late April, 54 percent of voters in New Hampshire wanted to stop construction on Seabrook, at least temporarily. Residents of western Massachusetts, even in the early summer, when gasoline shortages raised fears about

¹⁴ Memos from Rich Arenberg to Tsongas, 1 April 1979 (“total,” “formulate,” “remain,” “until,” “full-scale,” “extraordinarily”); Mitch Tyson memo to Richard Arenberg, 2 April 1979 (“We have,” “The president,” “either”); Richard Arenberg to Paul Tsongas, 2 April 1979, Box 179A, TC.

the coming winter fuel shortages, were almost as vocal in their fear and skepticism about nuclear power.¹⁵

Tsongas hoped that the accident would increase the chances for legislation to monitor nuclear power development more carefully. And although he hoped that nuclear fusion would eventually replace nuclear fission, the accident altered his hopes for technological solutions to the energy crisis. He now pushed legislation to encourage the commercialization of solar energy, although it had to compete with energy sources heavily subsidized by the federal government, like nuclear power, oil, and natural gas. In the wake of the accident he altered his position on nuclear power only slightly, however. He called for a moratorium on nuclear power plant licensing and construction until the causes of the Three Mile Island accident were evident but drew the line at shutting down existing reactors. “It’s one thing to say shut down [nuclear plants], but what happens when the lights go out?” he asked. He answered anti-nuclear activists sternly: “You’re not going to close down every nuclear power plant tomorrow. People are not going to sit in the dark and be cold.”¹⁶

On April 5, the night of the President’s energy speech, Tsongas attended a fundraising dinner for Essex County (Massachusetts) commissioner John W. McKean with an earplug in one ear. When Carter began his speech, Tsongas peered intently into the tiny television he had brought. Tsongas had already heard some of the broad outlines of the speech from a briefing, but he wanted to see how Carter handled the nuclear accident, and how he would pitch decontrol. Carter’s speech reiterated that “the energy crisis is real.” He assured the

¹⁵ Lowell Sun, 8 March 1979; The Energy Daily, 19 March 1979; Greenfield Recorder, 26 April 1979; Boston Globe, 10 May 1979; Amherst Morning Record, 22 June 1979.

¹⁶ Middlesex News, 1 April 1979 (“It’s”); Hampshire Gazette, Amherst Morning Record, Williamstown Transcript, (“You’re”) 9 April 1979; Dedham Daily Transcript, 23 April 1979.

public that the government would carefully investigate the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island and then turned to the causes of the crisis. “The fundamental cause of our nation’s energy crisis is petroleum,” he asserted. “We are dangerously dependent upon uncertain and expensive sources of foreign oil.” Tsongas agreed wholeheartedly with that assessment. Carter maintained that the country had to address the oil problem by producing and conserving more energy. So he would decontrol oil prices gradually to encourage both production and conservation. (Carter had gained the authority to decontrol prices on June 1, 1979 through legislation passed during the Ford administration.) To recapture some of the increased revenue that decontrol would give to oil companies, Carter asked Congress to pass a windfall profits tax. Some of the new tax revenues would go to developing energy resources, some to encouraging domestic production, some to assist those with low incomes in energy purchases. Carter announced other initiatives to speed oil, gas, and coal development and declared that he would soon announce other solar initiatives. Then he turned to conservation. Tsongas eagerly awaited Carter’s conservation measures only to find them vague and limited. The President urged states to enforce the fifty-five-mile-per-hour speed limit; he asked for congressional approval of standby authority for mandated thermostat settings in public commercial buildings; he indicated that he would take steps to eliminate free parking at government buildings to encourage car-pooling; and he declared that he would set targets for states to reduce consumption and would order mandatory conservation steps, like closing gas stations, if states did not meet their goals. He also announced a number of purely voluntary conservation measures. He urged Congress to use money from the proposed windfall profits tax to develop new energy resources—with special attention to solar power. He called for popular support of his initiatives, chastising

opponents for supporting “excessive oil company profits and for reliance on the whims of the foreign oil cartel.”¹⁷

Carter’s speech both pleased and disappointed Tsongas. He described his own threatened presidential candidacy as part of a “crescendo” of criticism that had forced Carter to address energy policy once again. But now, Tsongas called his favorite-son bid “for all intents and purposes dead.” Carter’s speech had effectively diminished two major obstacles to conservation and solar power: funding and the nuclear option. The windfall profits tax would create an enormous fund to promote conservation and alternative energy sources and provide low-income energy assistance. And the money would not fund nuclear power. Carter’s proposal did not satisfy Tsongas completely, however. Indeed, after Carter finished speaking, a clearly disappointed, Tsongas removed his earphone and addressed the guests. Rather than reading the speech he had brought, he summarized and analyzed Carter’s address, calling it the “best speech ever given by an American President on the energy situation” but “far short of what needs to be done.” Carter’s speech had left too much discretion to Congress, which would have to work hard to capture the increased profits that decontrol would create and then to use the money to fund conservation and solar power initiatives.¹⁸

Tsongas felt that the dire energy situation required inspiration akin to that generated by the Apollo space program. But leadership meant more than inspiration. True, in the heat of the congressional outcry against Secretary Schlesinger, and after the editorial cartoonist

¹⁷ Congressional Quarterly, President Carter’s Energy Address to the Nation, 5 April 1979 (qtns.); Salem News, 6 April 1979.

¹⁸ Lowell Sun, 5 April 1979 (“crescendo,” “for”); Salem News, 6 April 1979 (“best,” “far”); Brockton Daily Evening Enterprise and Brockton Times, 7 April 1979.

Herblock had lampooned the wasteful practices of the Department of Energy, Carter had quickly reacted, restricting energy use throughout the department. Tsongas believed, however, that true leadership meant restricting energy use before cartoonists pointed to the waste. And as he worked hard to convince his colleagues to pass legislation to promote renewable energy and conservation, he worked just as hard to convince his constituents. After his threats of a favorite-son campaign against the President, Tsongas's relationship with the media had changed dramatically. Normally he would not have watched television during a fundraising dinner, no matter how much he would have liked to do so. But the New York Times, the Washington Post, and ABC radio all wanted to hear his reaction to Carter's speech. Dozens of New England's prominent colleges and universities invited Tsongas to give commencement speeches. A variety of groups rushed to invite him to speak at other events as well. He seized the opportunity to reinforce his energy agenda, and to support Carter's call to capture "excessive oil company profits" with a windfall profits tax, investing that money in alternative energy sources, particularly solar power, and in conservation. On May 20, Tsongas began a tour of Northeast colleges at Bradford College, telling the crowd, "Our self-inflicted problems in resources are still too invisible." For the next month he attempted to heighten the visibility of those problems as much as his persuasive powers permitted.¹⁹

Tsongas, like Carter, found energy conservation difficult to shape into a positive program, to explain, and to sell. Before the first oil shortage in 1973, the idea of conservation ran counter to the way that most Americans saw the world. President Richard Nixon had believed that the nation's consumption of one-third of the world's oil proved

¹⁹ Paul Tsongas, "Loyola Lecture," 18 April 1979, Box 41B, TC; Brockton Daily Evening Enterprise and Brockton Times, 7 April 1979; Boston Herald American, 20 May 1979 (qtns.).

U.S. strength. In contrast, a few years later, Carter's first energy speech urged conservation as a moral imperative and as a "painful . . . sacrifice." Despite Carter's message, Tsongas increasingly believed the energy crisis reflected a "fundamental failure of management." He believed conservation efforts needed a "hard-nosed booster" to succeed. Carter seemed unable or unwilling to fulfill that role. Carter's most important action to encourage energy conservation by the summer of 1979 remained his decision to decontrol oil prices. Carter's faith in market mechanisms led him to that decision. But decontrol was not leadership. Decontrol simply allowed the market to determine energy prices. In fact, Tsongas knew, the government heavily subsidized the oil industry and probably always would. The only hope for conservation efforts and renewable sources lay in subsidizing them as well. Tsongas knew that a decontrolled energy market would push oil prices toward the world market rate, which would thus decrease waste and encourage conservation. But the market had shifted more than once in the previous decade, and if oil prices dropped again, consumption would simply return to previous levels. The market's power to encourage conservation rested on OPEC's ability to keep prices high. Conservation required institutional commitment to permanent changes.²⁰

Throughout May and June of 1979, Tsongas traveled around Massachusetts with two staff members in a dented Ford Pinto, delivering fourteen commencement addresses and appearing at dozens of other events. His staff repeatedly urged him to slow down his pace, but he had campaigned, in part, on the issue of his accessibility. Some politicians had cut down on travel to set an example. U.S. Representative Silvio Conte (D-MA) discontinued his mobile office, citing the energy shortage. Tsongas considered that strategy, but after

²⁰ Carter in Congressional Quarterly, *Energy Policy*, 592 ("painful"); Paul Tsongas, "Loyola Lecture," 18 April 1979, Box 41B, TC ("hard-nosed").

surveying constituents, he concluded that it would be more wasteful to ask them to drive to a central location individually. Traveling from Bradford's commencement to a convalescent home to deliver his message for the second time that day, Tsongas discussed the energy crisis with a reporter in the Pinto's tiny back seat. They passed service stations with hand-lettered "closed" and "No Gas" signs and the reporter asked him how the U.S. should deal with gas shortages. Tsongas replied that the country needed to drive smaller cars: "Gas guzzlers must go." When the reporter asked what he personally was doing differently in the face of the crisis he wondered, "What is there for me to change? I drive a small car. Everyone on my staff drives a fuel-efficient car." Asked if he had cut down on his speaking schedule, he claimed that the importance of his message necessitated travel. Tsongas rode in a Pinto to conserve energy, not to set an example. He expected others not to follow his example, but to follow his logic.²¹

Tsongas varied his energy speeches to suit the occasion. For example, he spoke to graduates of Emerson College, which specializes in media and the arts, about the importance of spreading the word about the energy crisis and told them they had "a greater responsibility because of the profession [they had] chosen." To get the attention of his audience, he usually began with premonitions of catastrophe, asserting that, if the Soviet Union really wanted to bring the West to its knees, all it needed to do was bomb Saudi Arabia or the Persian Gulf. Carter's April 5 address had hinted at such a scenario, referring to a "thin line of oil tankers stretched around the world," but Tsongas used more vivid imagery to characterize U.S. dependence upon foreign oil as "unthinkable military vulnerability." After getting the attention of his audience, he often turned to a discussion of

²¹ Fitchburg Sentinel and Enterprise, 11 May 1979; Lawrence Eagle Tribune, 20 May 1979; North Adams Transcript, 22 May 1979 (qtns.).

commonly cited alternatives to funding solar and conservation initiatives, dismissing them each in turn. He pointed to the dangers of nuclear power as an alternative to oil, emphasizing the risks of nuclear proliferation, rather than accidents. He usually touched upon the adverse effects of increased coal and oil extraction upon the environment. When the occasion called for audience participation, he dismissed other alternatives as well, like Mexican oil discoveries and drilling on the Outer Continental Shelf. To Tsongas these options merely postponed the inevitable. Sometimes listeners faulted Secretary of Energy Schlesinger, but Tsongas claimed that dismissing Schlesinger would matter little. And although he believed that the federal response to the Three Mile Island nuclear accident proved that “the Department of Energy is in a state of disarray,” he did not look to the DOE for solutions. Having disposed of unpleasant alternatives, he then confronted the difficult prospect of selling the idea of conservation to his audiences. Sometimes he pointed to the importance of previous federal conservation measures, particularly the fuel efficiency standards for automobiles—perhaps the most stringent conservation mandate ever passed by Congress. He emphasized that, despite these regulations, the automobile manufacturers had still dragged their feet. “Look at all the time Detroit has had to give us a good car,” he noted. “Why didn’t they see what’s coming?”²²

Other conservation ideas seemed difficult to sell. Weatherization did not stir audiences to action. Although well aware of the ineffectiveness of voluntary conservation measures, Tsongas periodically chided his country’s lack of will to conserve. At one

²² East Pepperell Free Press, 23 May 1979 (“unthinkable”); Middlesex News, 30 May 1979; Boston Herald American, 4 (“a greater”), 18 (“the Department”) June 1979; Gloucester Daily Times, 11 June 1979; Worcester Evening Gazette, 25 June 1979; Gloucester Daily Times, 11 June 1979 (“Look,” “Why”); Don E. Kash and Robert W. Rycroft, U.S. Energy Policy: Crisis and Complacency (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984).

commencement ceremony in early June, he harangued the audience for paying homage to the survivors of Valley Forge and praising the pioneers while they were unwilling to lower their thermostats or drive fewer miles. He found it difficult to make conservation sound positive. And freighted with warnings of nuclear proliferation and images of Soviet first strikes, his speeches depressed many audiences. Aware of his tone, he sometimes rationalized it by noting, “Every possible solution to the energy crisis is an unhappy one.” Other times, he apologized, not only for the tone of his speech, but for his whole generation, which had given the next one “a world that is unsteady and a future that is very uncertain.” He believed that the older generation had a responsibility to leave the next generations “a world in which they can live.” But he did not offer much hope. Americans were “consuming like there is no tomorrow, but there are tomorrows.” He struggled to imagine a positive future for conservation that did not appear stagnant or run counter to American values, the belief that “more is better.” He warned graduates that they would reap a “harvest of tragedy” if they could not change their “lifestyle and attitudes towards consumption of goods.” He told them that they would be engaged in a “struggle for survival” and that they should enter the job market “with an open-eyed appreciation of resource limits.” He told them to anticipate an era when the energy crisis would “test democracy” itself. Tsongas regaled graduates, searching for word about their bright future, with stories of “[s]hortages” that would “pull [their] society apart.” Not all doom and gloom, he soon told them that, “after a hard transition,” they “may actually reach a more human, less reckless way of living with [their] fellow human beings.”²³

²³ The Heights, 23 April 1979 (“more”); Boston Ledger, 4 May 1979 (“Every”); Boston Globe, 6, 18 (“shortages,” “after,” “may actually”) June 1979; Holyoke Daily Transcript, 9 June 1979 (“a world . . . uncertain,” “a world . . . live,” “consuming”); Quincy Patriot Ledger, 18 June 1979 (“harvest,” “lifestyle,” “struggle” “with,” “test”).

He emerged from his strenuous month of public speaking with several new insights into conservation. First, he began to connect energy issues with urban issues in a way that he had not yet done. He came to believe that the energy crisis would force a return to cities and precipitate the “end of the single-family house.” This would make the condition of cities even more important, so he decided to re-double his efforts for the city of Lowell, hoping to create a model to demonstrate energy conservation. At Tufts University in the spring, Tsongas addressed the New England Environmental Conference and met conservationist William H. Whyte. Whyte noted that older cities, like Boston, were “better situated for an energy future” since they were not as “car-oriented.” While this insight provided some hope to Tsongas, who hated what had happened to cities during the previous two decades, it also increased the need to spur urban revitalization efforts. Tsongas envisioned the gasoline shortage getting so acute that people would have to “find their recreation closer to home,” in places like Lowell. He led riparian conservation efforts across the state at the same time that he championed low-head hydropower on its rivers. Realizing that automobile transportation consumed three-quarters of the country’s gasoline, Tsongas began to think about the ways in which the automobile and highway transportation lobbies had affected urban development. They had enabled an exodus from cities like Lowell, to the suburbs, which encouraged wasteful use of oil. Finally, Tsongas decided to focus on a different audience. If individuals responded only to price signals and not to exhortations to conserve, perhaps he was addressing the wrong audience. He needed to focus upon institutions, not individuals.²⁴

²⁴ Medford Daily Mercury, 23 April 1979 (“better,” “car-oriented”); Boston Globe, 30 May 1979 (“end”); Quincy Patriot Ledger, 25 June 1979.

Tsongas spent as little time as he could on issues that did not pertain to the problem of conservation in some fashion, with the possible exception of a brief campaign against Apartheid, South Africa's system of racial separation. He spent little time working on the consumer affairs subcommittee of Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. Though he chaired only this one subcommittee, he remained reluctant to schedule hearings or consider legislation. Finally, late in the spring, one issue seemed important enough to demand immediate attention—credit card redlining. The Equal Credit Opportunity Act barred discrimination based on sex, marital status, race, color, religion, national origin and age, but not geographic criteria. Senator Carl Levin (D-MI), who had first become aware of the problem as a Detroit city councilman, believed the loophole created opportunities for racist lending practices and lobbied Tsongas for hearings. The issue got national press attention when a Detroit couple earning \$50,000 per year was denied a Mobil credit card and sued, charging Mobil with racial discrimination based on geographical profiling. Tsongas worried that such profiling might discourage urban revitalization. But his interest in the issue waned after the hearings. Representatives from credit rating companies reassured him that they used zip-codes as a less expensive proxy for income and other measures of credit-worthiness, that any racial discrimination on the basis of race was accidental, and that they never used zip-codes as the sole criterion. Tsongas scheduled markup sessions for September and directed a committee staffer to work on Levin's bill's language but spent little time on the issue himself. He believed that Levin's bill reached beyond what was needed to protect consumer rights. He was willing to grant the FTC a "grace period" to finish its investigation into the issue, but, in his opinion, more important racial issues required his attention.²⁵

²⁵ Patriot Ledger, 26 January 1979; Quincy Patriot Ledger, 22 May 1979; Springfield Daily News, 4 June 1979;

Initially, he thought that his involvement in Africa might help to mend any bad feelings left in the black community from the fact that he had challenged the only black U.S. senator. He devoted his second Senate speech to calling for the diplomatic recognition of Angola. George McGovern (D-SD), the chair of the Senate Foreign Relations African subcommittee, rose to commend his address, noting his “wholehearted agreement” with Tsongas’s “commonsense approach,” and calling Tsongas’s remarks “one of the most thoughtful presentations on Africa” he had ever heard. Like Tsongas’s first speech, however, this one attracted little notice. His constituents seemed uninterested, too. Their lack of attention surprised Tsongas, who contrasted the lack of interest among blacks to the large number of letters he received from Greek constituents concerned about Cyprus.²⁶

In the spring he asked the Fund for New Priorities to sponsor a conference on South Africa, and in late May he moderated a day-long discussion of divestiture and economic embargo. Believing that university divestiture would help undermine South African perceptions of United States acceptance, he asked American colleges and universities to divest themselves of holdings in companies in South Africa by 20 percent per year until South Africa committed itself to ending Apartheid and undertook “meaningful steps toward political, social and economic incorporation of all racial groups into a single state.” He addressed his remarks in particular to Harvard University president Derek Bok, believing that Harvard—as the nation’s first, wealthiest, and most internationally recognized university—had a special role to play in ending Apartheid. About one-quarter of Harvard’s

Quincy Patriot Ledger, 5 June 1979; Lowell Sun, 20 June 1979; Springfield Republican, 12 August 1979

²⁶ Lowell Sun, 6 March, 1979; Quincy Patriot Ledger, 6, 8 March 1979; The Morning Union, 8 March 1979; Lowell Sun 8 (“wholehearted,” “commonsense,” “one”) March 1979; Boston Globe, 10 June 1979; Lawrence Eagle Tribune, 16 June 1979.

\$1.2 billion endowment was tied up in South African investments. Tsongas made similar pleas to Tufts, Dartmouth, and Williams College. Student groups on campus had already called for divestiture, but Bok declined to speak with them, merely allowing them some time on the issue at a meeting sponsored by the Student Assembly. Tsongas repeatedly challenged Bok to debate the issue. Bok's attorney argued that it would be "inappropriate" for Bok to discuss university policy. Eventually, Bok agreed to discuss Apartheid with Tsongas privately. During their meeting, Bok asked Tsongas why universities should get involved when there was no consensus among political leaders about divestiture. Bok also noted that he agreed with the position of Andrew Young, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, who had argued that divestiture would only reduce U.S. influence in South African affairs. Tsongas later called Young. Moreover, he scheduled meetings with leaders of Massachusetts businesses with large holdings in South Africa. He believed that more effective leadership could turn the tide and told reporters, "This is ridiculous. What's the point of doing this and then getting wiped out by a quote from Andrew Young?"²⁷

New England began to seem a threat to President Carter's reelection bid as gasoline lines formed in the spring. After Carter had announced his intention to decontrol oil prices, Senator Kennedy criticized him roundly in a speech that many, including Carter, believed to be the start of a presidential bid. Carter's approval ratings had steadily dropped for more than a year. Attempting to strengthen his New England base in the coming election, Carter invited a number of prominent Massachusetts politicians to a state dinner for Japanese prime minister Masayoshi Ohira. The Massachusetts state senate president attended, as did

²⁷ Harvard Courant, 10, 15 May 1979; Worcester Evening Gazette, 12 May 1979; Quincy Patriot Ledger, 22 May 1979; Congressional Record ("meaningful"); Boston Globe, 30 May ("inappropriate"), 7, 10 June 1979; Lowell Sun, 11 June 1979 ("ridiculous").

Nicholas Rizzo, fundraiser for Tsongas's Senate campaign. A Boston Globe reporter noted that Massachusetts politicians almost outnumbered those from Georgia. And the Democratic National Committee (DNC) began to pressure Massachusetts to conform to its new rule for primaries. After 1976, the Democratic National Committee had ruled that presidential primaries would henceforth occur after the Florida primary. Since the DNC could not force New Hampshire's Republican state legislature to conform, its members concentrated on Massachusetts and Connecticut. Connecticut had changed its primary date from March 4 to March 25 at the urging of Carter staffer Anne Wexler, a former Connecticut Democratic party official, who called the state's governor, Ella Grasso. Massachusetts policymakers did not want to move the date, believing that an early primary helped draw additional attention to New England's plight. Carter may have met personally with Thomas McGee, the speaker of the Massachusetts lower house. And the DNC wrote to Secretary of State Michael Connolly urging him to change the date. Tsongas urged him not to change it. He believed the administration was "clearly not that optimistic about Massachusetts."²⁸

Tsongas had not discussed the 1980 campaign with Kennedy since March, but colleagues constantly asked Tsongas whether he had any inside information about Kennedy's interest in running. The two senators often traveled to and from Washington together. And on one flight from Boston to Washington, sitting near Kennedy, Tsongas overheard an attendant ask the question that had become taboo for him: "Are you going to run?" Tsongas strained to hear Kennedy's response, but came away with no more information

²⁸ Boston Globe, 11 May 1979; Boston Herald American, 21, 28 ("clearly") May 1979; 1 June 1979; Holland, "The Great Gamble," 63; Burton I. Kaufman, The Presidency of James Earl Carter (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1993), 140.

than he had at the start of the flight. “When he finished,” Tsongas told a reporter, “I had no idea what he said.”²⁹

Other world leaders agreed with Tsongas’s critical assessment of Carter’s energy conservation leadership. During the last week of June, Carter traveled to Tokyo to meet with world leaders in his third economic summit conference. Energy issues comprised most of the discussion, and foreign leaders criticized U.S. inability to curb oil imports. During Carter’s absence, OPEC raised prices another 60 percent and gas lines spread throughout the country. The President blamed congressional Democrats, and canceling a planned vacation in Hawaii, he rushed home to deliver another energy speech. Upon his return, a poll addressing public opinions on energy and related issues changed his mind. He came to believe that the problems in the U.S. “transcended the single issue of energy” and pointed to a larger issue: “Americans were rapidly losing faith in themselves and in their country.” Carter decided to spend a week considering the issue at Camp David, consulting with trusted advisors and others.³⁰

On July 15, Carter delivered his second energy speech of the year. Known now as his “malaise speech,” Carter’s speech touched upon a number of topics, most notably his belief that America suffered a “crisis of spirit.” With expectations low, the huge audience—drawn by Carter’s mysterious seclusion and rumors about his failing mental health—responded to the speech positively. Public opinion shifted dramatically, however, when Carter clumsily reorganized his cabinet over the following days. Immediately, Tsongas criticized Carter’s lack of attention to conservation, as well as his call for synthetic fuel development. He had

²⁹ Boston Herald American, 8 July 1979.

³⁰ Carter, Keeping Faith, 112-115.

expected Carter to make strides in conservation within the federal government, particularly with administrative changes directly under executive control. Carter could have provided environmental waivers to facilitate state efforts to move to coal power, for example. He could have championed the issue more effectively among federal departments. Some agencies, like the Department of Housing and Urban Development, made substantial purchases that could implement solar power more effectively. Dozens of other administrative changes could make a difference. “You ask the Rural Electric Administration what they are doing . . . ask the Housing and Urban Development department what they are doing,” Tsongas raged. Carter could not even seem to lead his own departments. Tsongas charged that, “despite Carter’s rhetoric, the administration was not doing anything.” Carter noted in his speech the difficulty of selling conservation. Tsongas agreed, adding that it “cuts into lifestyles.” But he felt that people were ready to accept conservation, and that real leadership meant championing conservation even though it was difficult to sell. Worse than his inaction, Carter proposed a massive program for creating synthetic liquid fuels (“synfuels”) from coal. Tsongas saw the synfuels proposal as an ineffective “quick fix” that would devastate areas of the western United States, eventually melt the polar ice caps, and pull funds out of solar and conservation efforts where they would have yielded larger long-term benefits. Later, when the details of Carter’s new energy plan emerged, Tsongas saw that the President had allocated synthetic fuels 61 percent of the program’s proposed \$142 billion budget, leaving only 2 percent for conservation.³¹

³¹ Boston Globe, 16 July 1979; Springfield Morning Union, 16 July 1979 (“quick”); Boston Herald American, 19 July 1979 (“you, “despite”); Kaufman, The Presidency of James Earl Carter, 145; Holland, “Great Gamble,” 71.

Tsongas's views about conservation, bolstered by the results of the New England Energy Congress, were vindicated in one of the most persuasive and popular books on energy policy to emerge from the energy crisis years, Energy Future. A collaboration of several experts and Harvard Faculty members, Energy Future appeared under the aegis of the Harvard Business School. The book immediately became a bestseller, selling more than 100,000 copies in hardcover by the end of the year. It received excellent reviews from the New York Review of Books, the Wall Street Journal, energy experts, the head of Atlantic Richfield, and the managing director of Royal Dutch Shell. Its authors—temporary celebrities—met with the Senate Energy Committee in late July, a week after the book's release. Tsongas asked them whether they had any contact with the Carter administration. Daniel Yergin, co-editor of the book, answered, "We have not met with anyone in the White House." Tsongas shot back, "Neither have I." Senator Howard Metzenbaum suggested that the committee had an obligation to set up such a meeting, and Senator Durkin responded, "Don't look at me. I can't even get people on the White House tour." The authors were even more critical of Carter's energy policies than were Tsongas and Durkin. Yergin told the committee, "What we face is not a spiritual crisis, but an energy problem." He cast solutions in "concrete recognition of self interest." And the most viable area to resolve the problem was in conservation, not synthetic fuels. Robert Stobaugh, the other co-editor advocated reversing Carter's priorities for synthetic fuels and conservation. "Instead of a target for 1990 of 2.5 million barrels a day for synthetic fuels and 500,000 for conservation, we believe that a realistic target for conservation savings is perhaps 5 million barrels a day." The authors believed synfuels would be much more difficult to produce, calling a target of 500,000 barrels per day "quite optimistic." The group generally agreed that

Carter had a problem with selling conservation, and chose synthetic fuels as a more politically “visible” solution that would attract attention like a new Manhattan Project or Apollo Program. Yergin signed Tsongas’s copy of the book, “To Paul Tsongas—our next president.”³²

At the end of July, Tsongas decided to put more pressure on the President and announced once again the possibility of running as a favorite-son candidate in the Massachusetts primary and then handing his delegates to Kennedy. In support, a group of liberal House Democrats accused the DNC of “outrageous attempts to intimidate” the state into relinquishing its hold on the March 4 primary date. The DNC denied it was trying to affect the political outcome of the race and suggested that it was merely trying to ensure compliance with national party rules set in 1976. The DNC subsequently notified Massachusetts’s Democratic State Committee that it risked forfeiting its right to have delegates seated at the national convention unless it made an effort in good faith to change the date to sometime between March 11 and June 11. A measure to move the date was before the Massachusetts House Rules Committee but had little chance of passage. Tsongas postponed a final decision on running in Kennedy’s place until fall. He threatened Carter only reluctantly, partially because he liked him, partially because he did not want to be responsible for unseating a sitting president and possibly bringing in a Republican like Ronald Reagan, partially because he felt he had never stopped campaigning since deciding to run for the Senate. He needed a break. The state’s registered voters nevertheless seemed somewhat interested in Tsongas’s efforts. The first week of August, polls favored Kennedy

³² *Boston Globe*, 30 July 1979 (“We,” “Neither,” “Don’t,” “What,” “Instead” “quite,” “visible”); Martin Greenberger, *Caught Unawares: The Energy Decade in Retrospect* (Cambridge, MA: Ballinger Publishing Co., 1983), 213-5 (“concrete”); *Worcester Telegram*, 12 August 1979 (“To Paul”).

by a five-to-one margin over Carter. When asked about a three-way contest between Carter, California governor Edmund G. “Jerry” Brown, Jr., and Tsongas, 25 percent indicated that they would back Carter, 24 percent were for Tsongas, and only 20 percent favored Brown. Tsongas gained more national exposure when the August 6 issue of Time Magazine hit newsstands featuring him as one of the country’s upcoming leaders. The biographical sketch, rife with errors, lauded Tsongas’s leadership and interest in energy issues. Tsongas urged other states to consider running Kennedy placeholders. Later that week, the DNC gave up efforts to push Massachusetts to change its primary date.³³

In early August Tsongas stepped up his vocal opposition to Carter’s energy plan, particularly the synthetic fuels portion, which he called “illogical.” He charged that the emphasis on synfuels “deflects attention from the reality that conservation and the renewables are the answer.” He worried that the low-income weatherization plan had “gotten lost in the shuffle.” “The idea that you can snap your fingers and synfuels will come along and save us is an illusion,” he declared. He noted that Carter’s plan was impossible to justify intellectually, but was consistent with “the American psyche because it is big, dramatic, and macho.” He advocated New Jersey Senator Bill Bradley’s weatherization and conservation proposal, which Bradley claimed could cut one-half to three-quarters of average household energy use. And he tried to trumpet the benefits of such a plan to utilities. Based on the findings of the New England Energy Congress, utilities would save money because they would not have to build new generating plants, particularly costly nuclear facilities. Tsongas held out for mandatory conservation regulations for the

³³ Lowell Sun; (outrageous”) 1 August 1979; Palmer Journal Register, Boston Globe, 1 August 1979; Time Magazine, 6 August 1979; Agawam Advertiser/News, 9 August 1979; Boston Herald American, 14 August 1979.

automobile industry, claiming that “there’s no excuse for having the kind of automobile fleet that we have.” He worked hard to convince senators to reduce the President’s proposed \$88 billion for synthetic fuels, and to divert synfuels money into conservation and renewable sources.³⁴

In late August, the Energy Development Caucus, a group of state legislators, asked Tsongas to announce his opposition to the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company’s (MMWEC) decision to purchase shares of the Seabrook nuclear power plant. Tsongas realized that the request presented an opportunity. He already opposed the Seabrook plant, but did not want to anger Massachusetts governor King, a staunch nuclear proponent. If Tsongas threatened to oppose all nuclear power plant construction until MMWEC and other utilities considered conservation measures, King would not need to take his opposition personally. Boston Edison had already spent \$300 million on the construction of the Pilgrim II plant even though it had not even received the necessary state and federal approvals to begin construction. Such expenditures would restrict the funding that utility companies could devote to encouraging conservation—the cheaper, safer alternative.³⁵

The next week, in an interview with a Boston television station, Tsongas discussed Boston Edison. Edison had been urging the NRC and the Massachusetts Public Utilities Commission to license a second Pilgrim reactor. Tsongas criticized Edison’s “poor” conservation record and the company’s lack of interest in renewable energy sources, which he termed the “only way out of a critical situation.” Conservation, he stipulated, was “the

³⁴ Springfield Morning Union, 3 August 1979 (“the American,” “there’s”); Quincy Patriot Ledger, 3 August 1979 (“illogical,” “deflects,” “the idea”); Springfield Daily News, 3 August 1979.

³⁵ Brockton Daily Evening Enterprise and Brockton Times, 5 September 1979.

dullest damn thing that ever came down the pike; it makes no headlines; people do it individually; nobody pays any attention to it.” But he suggested that nuclear advocates should be able to say they had done everything they could to push renewables and conservation before they asked for a new nuclear plant.³⁶

On September 9, Tsongas announced his new position at the Massachusetts statehouse. He urged the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities to require that utilities analyze “reasonable solar and conservation alternatives before adding to conventional centralized generating capacity.” MMWEC supplied electricity to thirty-one municipal energy departments, and eleven had already decided to purchase shares in Seabrook. Tsongas asked the remaining towns to oppose the purchase until MMWEC made a concerted effort for conservation and renewable sources. He urged them to consider more carefully the benefits of conservation before making long-term, expensive investments in expanding production, telling them, “You don’t go to Pilgrim II first; you go to Pilgrim II last.” Aides handed out a sheet of legislative items he had already proposed in Congress to promote conservation, and some that he would soon introduce. Tsongas’s showdown with nuclear power supporters created a focal point for the inchoate issue of conservation. And he matched his call with swaggering rhetoric, saying that if his threat meant the end of Seabrook, “so be it.”³⁷

None of the communities in western Massachusetts had decided whether to support MMWEC’s purchase. Tsongas’s threat solidified nuclear opposition in the western towns in

³⁶ Boston Globe, 21 August 1979; Boston Phoenix, 4 September 1979 (“poor,” “only,” “the dullest”).

³⁷ Worcester Evening Gazette, 4 September 1979 (“reasonable”); Boston Phoenix, 4 September 1979 (“You don’t”); Lowell Sun, 5 September 1979; Brockton Daily Evening Enterprise and Brockton Times, 5 September 1979 (“So”).

particular. Residents of South Hadley immediately asked the town's Municipal Light Board to place the issue on their town meeting agenda. Some groups began to consider not only whether their town should agree to invest in Seabrook, but whether municipal light boards should have the power to bond their towns for millions of dollars without seeking approval through town meetings. Some utilities responded immediately with vague and feeble claims about their efforts to encourage conservation and the development of renewable sources. Their claims often evoked questions and public criticism.³⁸

Although two town votes, in Mansfield and Danvers, supported MMWEC's purchase, Tsongas stood firm and reiterated his position. To get utilities to encourage conservation, people had to "close off the nuclear option." Under Tsongas's prodding, partnerships formed between nuclear activist groups and citizens concerned about the amount of local tax revenues devoted to expensive nuclear power. Tsongas's cajoling, coupled with data from the Energy Congress studies and Energy Future, brought attention to the financial issues, rather than fear of disaster. Activists contacted Tsongas's office to ask support for a variety of anti-nuclear efforts. Staffers sometimes provided a letter vaguely supportive of anti-nuclear positions; but were mainly interested in dispensing solid data about the financing of nuclear energy and its alternatives.³⁹

In October, the New England Electric System (NEES) shelved plans for a Rhode Island nuclear plant. The utility did not explicitly cite Tsongas's efforts, but a member of the NEES board had participated in the New England Energy Congress and argued its position on conservation to the rest of the board. The NEES vice president for consumer and

³⁸ Greenfield Recorder, 5 September 1979; Springfield Morning Union, 5 September 1979.

³⁹ Mansfield News, 6 September 1979; North Shore Sunday, (Danvers, MA), 9 September 1979 ("close"); Daily Evening Item, (Lynn, MA), 12 September 1979; Fall River Herald News, 26 September 1979.

information services noted that the money that would have funded the Charleston Rhode Island nuclear plant would now fund a \$335 million program in “energy conservation and load management.” The consortium expected to save \$1.2 billion over the next 15 years. According to Joseph Fitzpatrick, the Massachusetts director of energy resources, NEES was the first large, regional utility to develop a comprehensive plan. He hoped that its leadership would inspire other utilities to follow. Eric Swider, the president of the New England Council, called NEES’s plan a “major step towards implementing serious conservation practices for the region.”⁴⁰

Tsongas’s other conservation efforts began to bear fruit as well. On September 13, his conservation and alternative energy bills won unanimous support from the banking committee as part of the administration’s omnibus energy bill. Funding the two initiatives, a conservation bank and a solar bank, sharply reduced the amounts allocated to the development of synthetic fuels. The solar bank bill allowed the Department of Housing and Urban Development to create a solar bank to subsidize passive and active solar energy systems in new and existing homes and businesses through reductions in loan rates, effectively doubling Carter’s funding for such a measure. The conservation bank would be even larger, appropriating more than \$6 billion for home conservation efforts. Tsongas’s sections of the omnibus bill represented more than half of the \$13.5 billion the committee requested. In late October the Senate Energy committee unanimously passed the conservation bank bill. Not content with the victory of the Solar and Conservation Bank Acts, since they relied on funding from a windfall profits tax that Congress had not yet passed, Tsongas introduced another measure calling for \$5 billion in conservation funding

⁴⁰ Boston Globe, 10 October 1979.

for municipalities. With the Community Energy Efficiency Act he intended to provide municipalities with assistance in the form of block grants, which they could use for assistance in designing and building low-head hydroelectric plants, solid waste conversion facilities, solar demonstrations, and other projects. Tsongas had developed the legislation for the Community Energy Efficiency Act cooperatively with the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the NLC. Often the largest local users of energy, cities recognized the effects that conservation could have on their declining budgets. To be eligible for such a grant, a city of at least 50,000 people would have to create an energy office to estimate possible savings, establish a citizens energy advisory committee, and pledge to reduce consumption of energy to stated target levels. Municipal groups expected the program's introduction to be an important catalyst in local conservation efforts.⁴¹

Tsongas's conservation legislation moved forward quickly in the fall, particularly after a series of international events occurred. Jimmy Carter had allowed the Shah of Iran into the United States for medical treatment after reassurances from Iran that the country would take no retaliatory action. On November 4, a group of Iranian militants reacted to the news of the Shah's U.S. presence, storming the American embassy in Tehran and taking sixty Americans hostage. With U.S. citizens held in Iran Tsongas carefully began to suggest that U.S. lives depended on conservation efforts. Carter cut off imports from Iran as a symbolic gesture—U.S. imports from Iran in the previous summer had amounted to only 5 percent of supply and were almost non-existent by the time of Carter's cut-off—and worked towards a diplomatic solution. Increasingly, as his measures moved to the floor of the Senate and to

⁴¹ Quincy Patriot Ledger, 14, September 1979; 25 October 1979; Brockton Daily Enterprise, 28 September 1979; Nation's Cities Weekly, 1 October 1979; Brockton Daily Evening Enterprise and Brockton Times, 4 October 1979; Kaufman, The Presidency of James Earl Carter, 159-62.

conference committees, Tsongas characterized wasting energy as the moral equivalent to aid and comfort to the enemy.⁴²

Still, he could not generate support for more stringent automobile fuel efficiency standards. Instead, he found himself working to defend existing fuel efficiency regulations against automakers seeking to take advantage of the possible bankruptcy of the Chrysler Corporation. Throughout the first half of the year, rising gasoline prices had battered U.S. automakers. The unpredictability of oil prices hurt Chrysler more than General Motors or Ford, however. Before the Arab oil embargo, Chrysler had hesitated to produce a compact car to compete with Ford's Pinto and GM's Vega. Chrysler's designers and executives realized that they could not match the larger companies in all product lines, so they had opted to compete with the larger cars that had greater profit margins. Chrysler's big new cars hit showrooms just as the Arab oil embargo derailed the market for such vehicles. After the first shock the company attempted to compete with Ford's and GM's smaller models. Dealing with a severely restricted cash flow, Chrysler elected to cut costs, while Ford and GM radically restructured their product lines. Chrysler was able to retool only after the worst of the first oil shock had passed and finally introduced a line of compact cars just as American tastes turned back to larger cars. Again, Chrysler reacted by attempting to follow consumer preferences, redesigning larger lines like the St. Regis and the New Yorker, and expanding its production. The company also entered into the subcompact market with very popular Omni and Horizon models, but it lacked the resources to produce engines for these smaller cars. Instead, Chrysler signed a contract with Volkswagen to purchase 300,000 four-

⁴² Memo from Mary Helen Thomas to Tsongas, 11 November 1979, Box 62D, TC.

cylinder engines per year. Chrysler began to retool an eight-cylinder factory once demand for the vehicles surged, but it was too late.⁴³

On July 31, 1979, Chrysler announced its largest quarterly loss ever, \$207 million. Moody's Investors Service had already lowered the ratings for Chrysler's debt under expectations the company would continue to mount large losses throughout the year. The head of Chrysler's board appealed to the Carter administration for a cash advance in the form of tax credits against future earnings, as well as some relief from federal regulatory requirements. The company hoped for at least \$1 billion in assistance. The Carter administration immediately pledged to ask Congress for help. Carter could not allow Chrysler to fail for a number of reasons. In the administration's view, the company was too large to ignore—it would wreak economic havoc and perhaps tip the country into recession just before an election year. Chrysler's bankruptcy would also increase monopolistic concentration in the automobile industry. Finally, Chrysler supplied all of the U.S. Army's tanks and fulfilled other huge defense contracts as well. The Treasury Department had studied the issue since the spring of 1979. On August 9, Treasury Secretary G. William Miller advocated some form of intervention but suggested that it would be far less than the \$1 billion that Chrysler requested. Miller became more circumspect later that month and suggested that Chrysler could produce a plan that would eliminate the need for government assistance. On August 22, the day after Miller's hedging, Carter said that he was examining the request for aid "very cautiously" and that Chrysler would have to restructure its management and provide ample security for any loans or guarantees forthcoming from the

⁴³ Washington Post, 11 November 1979; Boston Herald American, 25 November 1979; Reginald Stuart, Bailout: America's Billion Dollar Gamble on the 'New' Chrysler Corporation (And Books, South Bend Indiana, 1980).

government.⁴⁴ In its analysis of the Chrysler situation in early September of 1979, the Congressional Research Service pointed to three main causes of Chrysler's financial difficulties: "untimely and questionable management decisions, the effects of energy shortages on product demand and consumer tastes and preferences, and the increasing costs of complying with Federal regulations." Automobile manufacturers, General Motors in particular, seized upon the issue to push for relaxed efficiency standards. Fuel-efficiency standards were due to increase by two miles per gallon per year beginning in 1981, double the rate of the preceding three years. Other regulations were scheduled for 1981, when companies would have to introduce passive restraints and air bags in the largest models. A Chrysler-sponsored study estimated that operating profits would need to increase by 13 percent per year for the company to break even under the new regulatory regime. Another study by Transportation Systems Center of Cambridge Massachusetts estimated that Chrysler would have to spend \$44 million between 1979 and 1983 to comply with new regulatory mandates. And another study emphasized the difficulty that Chrysler, as the smallest of the Big Three, faced in attempting to accommodate the new regulations.⁴⁵

Chrysler formulated a restructuring and bailout plan in response to the Carter administration's skepticism, submitting a new plan on September 16 that the administration rejected outright. Treasury Secretary Miller called the plan's \$1.2 billion in loan guarantees "way out of line." By the end of the month Chrysler issued its third quarter profit statement, which showed a loss of \$461 million, more than double the entire loss of the previous year.

⁴⁴ New York Times, August 1, 1979; Wall Street Journal, 23 August 1979 (qtn.).

⁴⁵ Economics Division of the Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, The Question of Federal Assistance to the Chrysler Corporation: A Background Analysis, 5 September 1979 ("untimely"); National Journal, 25 August 1979; New York Times, 17 August 1979.

The company indicated that, unless Congress held out the “firm prospect of help” within the next two months, the company would have to file for bankruptcy protection. Over the next couple of days the Carter administration re-examined its position and offered a \$1.5 billion bailout, contingent upon Chrysler’s ability to find another \$1.5 billion in private support.⁴⁶

Tsongas paid little attention to Chrysler’s woes at first but became increasingly involved in November. During the first week of November, Senator Edward Kennedy launched his presidential campaign against Jimmy Carter with a sharp attack on the administration’s anti-inflation program. Carter, in an effort to counter Kennedy, instructed Alfred Kahn—the administration’s spearhead for fighting inflation—to voice concern about the cost-of-living-adjustments in the still unsigned contract between the United Auto Workers and Chrysler Corporation. But United Auto Workers President Douglas Fraser, and many in the national press, understood Kahn’s statements as a repudiation of the administration’s support for a bailout. Accordingly, the administration immediately repudiated Kahn’s statements. But Kahn’s remarks resonated with Tsongas, who began to see the bailout as an opportunity to hit two of the main causes of inflation: lack of conservation and cost-of-living-adjustments. Improved fuel efficiency led to conservation, which decreased energy demand, which brought prices down. And cost-of-living-adjustments perpetuated the inflation that oil price hikes caused.⁴⁷

Beginning November 14, the Senate Banking Committee held six days of hearings on Chrysler, and senators quickly took positions for and against the bailout. Tsongas lacked sympathy for the company at first, noting later that he wanted to “tell them to go to hell.”

⁴⁶ Washington Post, 16 September 1979 (“way”); 11, 31 October 1979 (“firm”); 9 November 1979.

⁴⁷ The Boston Phoenix, 25 December 1979; The Washington Star, 10 November 1979.

He soon changed his mind, though. On November 16, Tsongas traveled to Detroit to deliver a foreign policy speech. Struck by Detroit's similarity to Lowell and Lawrence, Tsongas reconsidered the bailout. When he returned from the trip he told his staff to set everything else aside—their new priority would be Chrysler. They quickly reorganized the office to allow seven legislative aides to focus on the bailout issue full-time under the direction of Susan Broh, Tsongas's legislative aide for banking, and Mitch Tyson, Tsongas's energy and industrial policy expert. On November 27, Tsongas opposed the administration proposal and offered his own. Though remarkably similar to a proposal from Senator Richard Lugar (R-IN), Tsongas's reflected particular concerns. The Tsongas proposal would require the Secretary of the Transportation to examine Chrysler's relationship with the rest of the automotive industry and assess the company's long-term viability. In doing so, the Secretary was to pay particular attention to “energy trends and events on the auto industry, including long-term capital requirements, the rate of technological change, and shifting market characteristics.” It was also to assess “the capability of the industry as a whole to respond to the requirements of the 1980s.” The proposal also required the Department of Transportation to initiate an annual study of the industry and the new energy efficiency and emission requirements and comprehensively assess “the state of the motor vehicle industry and its interaction in an integrated economy.”⁴⁸

Both Tsongas and Lugar believed, with a number of other critics, that the administration's plan left too much discretion in the hands of the Treasury Secretary. Both felt that the bill needed to demand sufficient sacrifice from all of the Chrysler stakeholders,

⁴⁸ Washington Post, 15 November 1979; Boston Phoenix, 25 November 1979 (“tell”); Lowell Sun, 27 November 1979; Mitch Tyson interview, 2 October 2003; Congressional Record, 27 November 1979 (“energy,” “the capability,” “the state”).

including the UAW and management, in order to discourage other companies from asking for bailouts. Hearing that Japanese banks were willing to step forward with possibly as much as \$500 million in loans, Lugar and Tsongas wanted all parties to accept their share of pain and suffering before the federal government stepped in. Tsongas particularly wanted the bailout to be large enough so that Chrysler could continue to compete with the fuel-efficient technological improvements GM and Ford already had begun to make in their product lines.⁴⁹

Tsongas met with Chrysler chair Lee Iacocca and the two got along well. Iacocca had been dismissed from Ford Motor Company the previous year because he wanted to shift production to subcompacts sooner than did William Ford. And while Chrysler Corporation and Iacocca had lobbied against fuel efficiency standards in 1975, Chrysler produced the fleet with the highest average mile-per-gallon rating. Chrysler's marginally better fuel efficiency rating resulted in part from GM's influence on emissions standards legislation. GM had shaped emission standards legislation to suit its own designs—which favored the catalytic converter over other technologies. But antimonopoly rulings in federal courts had kept Chrysler from purchasing catalytic converters from GM, forcing Chrysler to reduce emission standards by lowering fuel consumption. American Motor Company had requested relief from fuel efficiency standards and Tsongas wanted to discourage Chrysler and other automobile companies from following suit. Iacocca seemed amenable.⁵⁰

On November 29, Tsongas and Lugar shaped a compromise that, with a 10-5 vote, became the basis for constructing a measure to send to the Senate floor. The bill called for

⁴⁹ Lowell Sun, 27 November 1979; New York Times, 29 November 1979.

⁵⁰ Mitch Tyson interview, 2 October 2003; New York Times, 17 August 1979; Washington Post, 4 November 1979; Stuart, Bailout, 94-107.

Chrysler and other stakeholders to put together \$2.75 billion in aid and cost-cutting measures in exchange for \$1.5 billion in loan guarantees, for which the federal government would gain first pick of assets if Chrysler failed. Douglas Fraser had claimed earlier that the UAW would accept wage cuts only if the survival of Chrysler were at stake. Tsongas argued for larger wage sacrifices so that Chrysler would stay competitive, and so that the bailout would not set a precedent by watering down legislation for efficiency and emissions. The Banking Committee voted 10-4 to send the Tsongas-Lugar compromise to the Senate floor. There was widespread consensus that, although some senators might try to kill the bill, the compromise imposed reasonably acceptable sacrifices on all stakeholders.⁵¹

Most of the rancor and difficulty of achieving a compromise with the House version of the bill centered on the wage freeze, which was not a provision of the House version. The UAW at one point alleged that it would rather the company go bankrupt, but Tsongas suspected the union was bluffing. When the Senate passed the bill back to the House for consideration Lugar and Tsongas worked with members of the Banking and Urban Affairs Committee, drafting several compromises and searching for a middle ground before the end of the congressional session. Tsongas and Representative Stewart McKinney (D-CT), with whom Tsongas had co-chaired the New England Congressional Caucus Energy and Transportation Task Force, hurriedly drafted a new compromise that they created while leaning against statues in Statuary Hall. Several versions of the bill circulated simultaneously. The House Rules Committee had to create special rules for the expected floor debate on a bill the members had not yet seen. By mid-December, Tsongas had lost all enthusiasm for the process, but was committed to compromising as much as possible to get the bill through.

⁵¹ Boston Herald American and New York Times, 30 November 1979.

The Rules Committee offered an open rule because members of both houses of Congress expected to continue to draft compromises into the weekend and no proposal appeared to have the upper hand.⁵²

On December 20 the Senate finally moved to a vote. Senators first considered a short-term loan to the corporation, but voted it down by a 2-1 margin. There had been a great deal of discussion behind the scenes and an apparent agreement to oppose an agreement for \$400 million in wage concessions from union workers in favor of a figure closer to \$500 million. On December 18, the day before the vote, both the UAW and Chrysler mounted a massive lobbying effort to persuade senators to vote in favor of the \$400 million plan. The next day the \$400 million plan passed and several senators, feeling betrayed, threatened a filibuster. Tsongas denounced the vote as a “Pyrrhic victory” and pledged to oppose the amendment on reconsideration. Republicans immediately pushed for reconsideration. Senator Robert Byrd summoned the leading senators to the Lyndon B. Johnson chamber to discuss it. An hour later the group emerged with the Lugar-Tsongas plan as the framework for the final Senate bill. The package quickly passed, and Tsongas prepared for the next day’s conference committee. Tsongas had carefully worked out the compromise language in the preceding weeks and expected no surprises in the conference committee. He figured that the final contribution of the union would total \$460 million, about halfway between the Senate and House versions of the bill, and that there would be no other sticking points. He told reporters, “We’ll be O.K., assuming we all know how to divide by two.” The banking committees of the House and Senate convened on December 20 to craft a compromise

⁵² New York Times, 11 December 1979; Washington Star and Boston Globe, 13 December 1979.

between the two versions. Five hours later they emerged with the most complex and expensive bailout bill in American history.⁵³

The bailout law provided for four years of federally guaranteed loans to Chrysler. In return, the company had to submit an acceptable business plan to a government review board and to introduce employee stock-ownership plans. The business plan the Board accepted required the company to assemble loan interest deferrals from its lenders and to raise capital by selling \$320 million of stock, 51 percent, in Chrysler Finance Corporation, \$196 million in real estate and more than \$100 million in other assets. The plan required Chrysler to secure \$187 million in loans from state and local governments, \$100 million from dealers and suppliers, and \$342 million from deferred compensation of UAW employees. The operating plan also required the company to accelerate the production of new small, fuel-efficient cars, including the K car. By 1984, the company would have to produce only front-wheel-drive cars and trucks, with predominantly four-cylinder engines.⁵⁴

Some of Tsongas's colleagues were surprised at his role in the bailout, especially his active pursuit of wage concessions from the UAW. At one point during the struggle, a Kennedy staffer called Tsongas's office to ask him to reduce the wage concessions. But Tsongas did not return the call and later claimed to have forgotten. Later, one prominent liberal asked, "The environment can't be compromised, but food on the table can be, is that it?" Tsongas knew he had not compromised food—UAW's workers would still earn far more than most other manufacturing line workers in the world. The UAW's Don Stillman hinted at future problems between Tsongas and organized labor if Tsongas continued his "rationalistic" approach. "You're talking about real people out there who have to put bread

⁵³ New York Times and Boston Globe, 20 December 1979; The Boston Phoenix, 25 December 1979 ("We'll).

⁵⁴ Stuart, Bailout, 170-181.

on the table,” he noted. Tsongas did not seem worried about support from organized labor, but he felt someone should speak for future generations. His role in the bailout ensured that he would have a larger audience when he did so. Later he believed that the company could have survived with smaller wage concessions. But he did not see the UAW as a vital source of support and worried little about reelection, with a campaign still four years away. His involvement in the Chrysler bill made him reevaluate his base of support over the coming months. As he considered the future of the Democratic Party, he became involved in the extremely complicated and controversial Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, which seemed to have no constituency at all.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ The Boston Phoenix, 25 December 1979.

CHAPTER FIVE

ALASKA HOSTAGES: PAUL TSONGAS AND THE ALASKA NATIONAL INTEREST LANDS CONSERVATION ACT OF 1980

Throughout his first year as a senator, Paul Tsongas consciously cultivated a serious demeanor, which amplified the gravity of his campaign for sane energy policy. During the spring of 1979 Tsongas's chief legislative aide Richard Arenberg satirized the senator's grim crusade in a fictitious press release. It announced that staff members could use lights after 10:30 pm only for official business, had to set thermostats to 50 degrees, and limit themselves to "three hot meals per week," and not purchase gasoline on Sundays. Arenberg concluded with a fake statement from the senator: "I think if Americans stop enjoying life so much, we'll all be much better off." The ruse provoked a rare laugh from the solemn senator. Tsongas and a staff member wrote a comical speech intended for the Senate floor that spring, but Tsongas feared that he might undermine the seriousness of his message and saved the satire for a better opportunity, which arrived that fall.¹

On November 26, 1979 he briefed his colleagues on a plan to create sources of domestic oil by raising dinosaurs, planting them in the ground, and waiting millions of years to harvest the resultant crude oil. The facetious proposal mocked Jimmy Carter's conservation policies and synfuels development program. It derided the seeming illogic of Congress and the wastefulness of the American people. The speech also poked fun at Tsongas's peculiar generational perspective—only he would consider a program that would benefit people fifty-thousand generations in the future. Although tongue-in-cheek,

¹ Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003; Lowell Sun, 29 January 1979; "Satirical Energy Conservation Press Release," undated 1979 ("three," "I think"), Box 147E, Tsongas Collection, University of Massachusetts Lowell, Center for Lowell History (TC hereafter).

“Domestic Oil from Domestic Dinosaurs” reiterated Tsongas’s vision of the U.S. energy situation. And his tone became much more serious as he concluded that his proposal “will give Americans something to feel good about while we are shivering in the cold and in the dark after consuming all the oil from Mother Nature’s first round of oil production.” The next senator to speak from the floor that day, Ted Stevens (R-AK), warned of Alaska’s “problem . . . concerning oil and gas development.” Stevens entered into the record an article from the Wall Street Journal outlining the hardships that oil companies endured drilling in Alaska. The article noted that since the 1968 discovery of a large deposit in Prudhoe Bay, most holes had turned out dry. According to the article, oil companies blamed the Department of the Interior for being slow to release lands for drilling. Stevens concurred, placing the blame squarely upon Jimmy Carter, who he believed should issue executive orders to lease new lands. “The Federal Government still controls over 90 percent of the land mass of Alaska,” Stevens noted. He blamed the Carter administration for “doing everything it can to close these lands off to exploration and ultimate development.” According to Stevens, energy independence could only be achieved “through full exploration and development of Alaska’s oil and gas potential.” Tsongas and Stevens disagreed about how to achieve energy independence. But during 1980, they negotiated the largest conservation measure in U.S. history, the Alaska National Interest Lands Act (ANILCA). The act was arguably Tsongas’s greatest legislative achievement.²

In 1980, Tsongas achieved a number of notable successes in energy policy. Congress passed four of his energy initiatives. His Solar Energy Bank bill, in tandem with his Conservation Bank proposal, passed as Title V of the Energy Security Act of 1980. He

² Congressional Record, 26 November 1979 (“will,” “problem,” “the Federal,” “through”).

introduced a Community Energy Efficiency Act as well, which provided community block grants to assist municipalities in their conservation and renewable energy efforts. The bill was among the appropriations for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Tsongas also introduced the Magnetic Fusion Engineering Act, which passed in September, to provide funding for research into a new type of nuclear reaction that he hoped would eventually provide cleaner, safer power. And he became intimately involved in the dispensation of public lands in Alaska. Although not energy legislation, passage of ANILCA hinged upon energy concerns. The battle pitted the oil industry and its allies in Alaska's state government against arguably the most powerful environmental lobby ever created—the Alaska Coalition. Throughout the year, Tsongas became convinced that the Democratic Party would suffer substantial losses in the election of 1980. To Tsongas, consequently, ANILCA's passage that year would be critically important to resource conservation.

National interest lands had not been part of the original plan for the state of Alaska but originated in two issues that the Alaska Statehood Act (1958) left unresolved: the disposition of native land claims and the provision of funds to secure the future of the state's government. Since Native groups were not organized to lobby Congress at the time, the Statehood Act provided Congress with the authority to settle Native claims in the future, postponing their resolution to a future date. To secure the economic base of the new state government, Congress allowed it to select more than one hundred million acres of land, an area larger than the State of California. State land could include inalienable mineral land, forest land, school and university land, which the state would hold in trust, and land for community expansion. The act gave state officials three years to select its lands. But selections proceeded slowly because the state did not yet have adequate information upon

which to base its selections. Alaska also lacked the ability to manage the selected lands, so Congress extended the selection deadline to twenty years. During the 1960s, the state limited its selections to mineral lands, because it needed the revenues to manage other types, and by the end of the decade it had selected only one quarter of its entitlement. With Native claims unsettled, state land selections ran into increasing friction. Native groups organized around claim disputes. In 1963, Interior Secretary Stewart Udall appointed a task force to study the question of Native land claims. Three years later, the newly formed Alaska Federation of Natives asked Udall to freeze state land claims until Native claims could be resolved, and he did so. Two years later, Humble Oil Company and the Atlantic Richfield Company discovered a large deposit of oil near Prudhoe Bay. A consortium of oil companies planned to build an oil pipeline from Prudhoe to Prince William Sound, which would traverse eight hundred miles of disputed Alaska land. Native groups, and their powerful new allies, urged Congress to settle their claims as rapidly as possible.³

During congressional consideration of Native claims, environmentalists began to push in Alaska for the emerging concept of national interest lands, lands set aside for park systems, wilderness areas, and wildlife refuges in the interest of all U.S. citizens. After a 1967 trip to Alaska, Sierra Club president Edgar Wayburn made Alaska lands a new priority of his organization. Joseph Fitzgerald, chair of the Federal Field Committee for Development Planning in Alaska, began to see the need for the federal government to manage part of the land, and the need to settle claims before development could proceed in the state. At the suggestion of one of Fitzgerald's staff, Congress required the Department of the Interior to

³ G. Frank Willis, "Do Things Right the First Time": Administrative History The National Park Service and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980 (Washington D.C. U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1985).

study and recommend national interest lands to Congress. The Senate acted more slowly, giving lobbyists from the newly formed Alaska Coalition—a coalition of environmentalist organizations—ample time to petition senators to include a national interest provision in the Senate bill as well. In its final form, the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (ANCSA) allowed the federal government to withdraw lands for a variety of uses after a period of study. It provided in Section 17 (d) (2) timetables for withdrawals, study, and congressional action on these withdrawals. According to Representative Morris Udall (D-AZ), the D-2 amendment would “allow the American people a shot at some prime acres before they are all gone.”⁴

The federal government studied the lands for designation as an appropriate management unit, and on December 17, 1972, Interior Secretary Rogers Morton forwarded the proposed legislation to Congress. Almost immediately, members of the House and Senate introduced Morton’s proposals and a number of others for final disposition of the lands. But the bills languished during Richard Nixon’s abbreviated second term and the Gerald Ford administration as a result of the chaos attending the Watergate hearings and Ford’s lack of interest in Alaska lands. During this time, federal and state researchers collected even more information that they hoped would lead to a settlement. By 1978, the Park Service estimated that 400 person-years of research had occurred on Alaska. The state had also been the subject of writers and photographers, who helped to fuel a burgeoning “armchair clientele” for public interest lands in Alaska.⁵

⁴ Donald W. Carson and James W. Johnson, Mo: The Life and Times of Morris K. Udall (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2001), 195 (“allow”).

⁵ Roderick Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind, 2nd edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 294.

In 1976, Jimmy Carter made passage of an Alaska National Interest Lands Act a campaign issue, pledging to support a bill and to include environmentalists in his administration. Additionally, Morris Udall, Stewart's brother, assumed the chair of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, and eagerly sought a resolution to the national interest lands issue. Udall appointed John Seiberling (D-OH) to chair a special Committee on Oversight and Alaska Lands, to help construct a bill. After Carter's election, conservation and environmental groups funded the Alaska Coalition's effort to press for a settlement to the Alaska lands issue, and a resolution seemed imminent. On the first day of the Ninety-fifth Congress, Udall introduced H.R. 39, with seventy-five co-sponsors. It provided for setting aside 115 million acres of land in federal management systems and for other measures, the most controversial of which was the creation of 145 million acres of "instant wilderness," which would bypass the usual approval process. Markup sessions began in January of 1978, and Representative Tsongas played a crucial role when the full committee began to consider the bill.⁶

Tsongas decided early in the markup sessions that Udall's bill struck the correct balance between competing interests. Tsongas viewed markups as processes leading to eventual compromise between extremes. Accordingly, he offered language just radical enough to place Udall in the center, rather than at the extreme left of committee positions. He offered several strengthening amendments that the Alaska Coalition had prepared, including successful amendments to enlarge Katmai National Park, and to add substantially to Lake Clark's area. Tsongas's greatest achievement occurred near the end of markup sessions. Representative Seiberling wanted to get the bill out of the subcommittee and

⁶ Willis, *NPS and ANILCA*, http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/williss/adhi4f.htm, accessed 17 March, 2004.

offered a compromise between the initial markup legislation's call for eighty-two million acres of "instant wilderness" and the opposition's proposal of thirty-four million acres. Before the vote, Tsongas spoke with Sierra Club lobbyists who urged him to propose amendments to create wilderness acreage halfway between the amounts advocated by Seiberling and the opposition. When the time came to vote, however, Tsongas put his foot down. "We're down to a bare bones bill already," he said to the compromise offer. He told the subcommittee that he would oppose the compromise outright, because he did not want to lose negotiating room when the bill came to the House floor. Peter Kostmayer (D-PA) agreed and joined Tsongas. Opponents of the bill voted reflexively against Seiberling, killing his compromise, 9-7. The subcommittee reported the bill unaltered, with eighty-two million acres of wilderness. Sierra Club lobbyists rejoiced, believing that Tsongas's tactics had saved eighteen million acres of wilderness.⁷

The House considered the bill for three days in May 1978, passing H.R. 39 by a vote of 279-31, before attention turned to the Senate, which was not optimistic about passing a bill before the expiration of D-2 protection on December 15, 1978. Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus warned Congress that he would find other ways to protect the lands if the legislature failed to pass a law before the deadline. Senator Stevens believed that a resolution was necessary to develop Alaska's lands properly and he worked for the bill. Senator Henry Jackson (D-WA), the energy committee chair, and Stevens asked the other Alaska senator, Mike Gravel (D-AK), to participate in markup sessions, but he declined. On October 5, 1978, after forty-two painstaking markup sessions, the committee reported a bill geared substantially to Stevens's interests. Conservationists, the Carter administration, and

⁷ New England Sierran, March 1978; Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003.

supporters of H.R. 39 in the House uniformly rejected the Senate bill. Little time remained for a conference with the House, but Jackson called the principal figures—Stevens, John Durkin (D-NH), Udall, and Seiberling—together to explore options. Gravel sent Stevens a telegram indicating his support for compromise. The subsequent series of ad-hoc conferences went well at first, but deteriorated when Gravel introduced a series of amendments that others thought unreasonable. Jackson assured them that Gravel's demands were negotiable and asked his staff to develop options. During the ad hoc conference, as it became clear that Gravel would allow no compromise after all, Stevens began to talk to others about the occupational hazards of campaigning in Alaska. Traversing the state's huge area through unpredictable, sometimes violent weather entailed scores of dangerous plane trips. Up for reelection that year, Stevens asked Udall to remember his positions if something happened to him. Gravel killed the compromise proposal a few days later by declaring that he could not allow the bill to reach the floor unless it mandated access to transportation corridors in the Kobuk River area of the Gates of the Arctic. He blamed conservationists for his actions, claiming that he had to defend the state against their efforts to reserve "all of Alaska." Stevens remarked, "I feel like a father who has gone to the delivery room only to be told that his new son has been stillborn." Representatives and senators hurriedly assembled an amendment to the Oregon Omnibus Wilderness Bill to extend D-2 protection for an additional year, but once Gravel threatened to filibuster it, they removed it. Durkin expressed the anger of many on the Senate floor, declaring, "The people of Alaska should know that this compromise foundered on two words, . . . 'Mike Gravel.'" And he warned that President Carter would invoke the Antiquities Act. While many believed that Gravel had killed the compromise so that he could mount his 1980 re-election

campaign in opposition to the bill, some noted that the oil and mining industries did not like the bill. Stevens claimed that his only mistake lay in “trusting Gravel.” He even suggested that Gravel needed “psychiatric help” and left to campaign for re-election in Alaska. Gravel spent \$24,000 funding an advertising campaign attacking Stevens. Stevens won the election, but his plane crashed en route to Juneau in December for Governor Jay S. Hammond’s inauguration, killing his wife of 26 years. Stevens later hinted that the plane trip was part of an effort to piece together the failed Alaska lands bill. Testifying before the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee in February 1979, he said, “I think if that bill had passed, I might have a wife sitting at home when I get home tonight.”⁸

In November 1978, Alaska officials filed to select forty-one million acres of land, one-quarter of which lay within proposed conservation areas. Their actions violated an oral agreement, according to Interior Secretary Andrus, who two days later withdrew almost one-hundred ten million acres under section 204(e) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). The next month, just before the expiration of D-2 protection, President Carter designated seventeen national monuments in Alaska, with a combined area of about fifty-six million acres. By the end of December, the Carter administration had used executive authority to protect almost all of the area under consideration by Congress. Only congressional action could override the National Monument designations. Alaska’s residents reacted to the sweeping measures for federal protection by burning Carter in effigy, engaging in civil disobedience, and threatening Interior Department personnel. They also increasingly supported a legislative solution to the issue, as Carter had intended. The Alaska legislature

⁸ *Washington Post*, 19 October 1978 (“all”); 30 September 1979 (“I feel,” “the people,” “trusting,” “psychiatric,” “I think”); Willis, NPS and ANILCA, http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/williss/adhi4f.htm

voted to appropriate \$2.5 million to lobby for a bill closer to the state's perceived interests. Participants looked to conclude legislative action in the next session of Congress.⁹

In 1979 the House of Representatives revised H.R. 39 without Tsongas. After a contentious battle between Udall and new conservative members of his committee, the House passed a version similar in most respects to the original, 360-65. Secretary Andrus directed his agencies to complete documentation required for a twenty-year extension of withdrawals, an added impetus for Congress to resolve the issue. Tsongas expected John Durkin, who had been the environmental community's standard bearer on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, to lead the fight to strengthen the bill. As the markup sessions approached, Senator Tsongas considered passage of a strong Alaska Lands bill his top environmental priority, followed by rivers legislation and protection of the George's Bank fishing grounds. Tsongas asked Udall to loan his special counsel, Roy S. Jones, to him for the duration of Senate consideration of the bill. Jones, a Vietnam veteran and West Point graduate, had drafted much of H.R. 39 while working for Udall. He and Tsongas got along well, and his expertise was invaluable. Later, Richard Arenberg, Tsongas's chief legislative aide, remarked that the best way to get a perfect Alaska lands bill was to lock Jones in a closet and let him argue with himself until it came out right.¹⁰

By October, Tsongas staffers Arenberg and Jones, with the Alaska Coalition and some of Andrus's staff, had helped assemble a package of forty-three amendments for markup sessions, which they cleared with Stevens beforehand. Jackson had committed himself to get the bill to the floor quickly. Richard Arenberg told Tsongas that he could only count on

⁹ Willis, NPS and ANILCA, http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/williss/adhi4f.htm.

¹⁰ Richard Arenberg, "Memo to Staff re: Legislative Priorities," 15 September 1979, TC; Roy S. Jones interview, 4 November 2003.

Durkin and Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH) as allies during markup sessions. They hoped that the Senate leadership would be unwilling to consider the bill on the floor without a time agreement to help prevent a filibuster. Arenberg believed that Tsongas would involve himself only in the bill's national parks provisions. In his view, Tsongas had a great deal of flexibility to approach the bill from "the environmentalist extreme," as he had in the House, or as a "pragmatic representative . . . working to compromise and fashion the bill."¹¹

Markup meetings began on October 9, and Tsongas became intimately involved almost immediately, partially because he habitually attended markup meetings whenever possible. Since Gravel had attempted to delay the proceedings by convincing committee members to schedule additional hearings in Alaska, the committee scheduled meetings for eight o'clock in the morning to discourage his attendance. That strategy discouraged many others from attending as well, leaving Stevens, Jackson, and Durkin to draft the legislation with Tsongas. Tsongas thought the bill important, although his constituents rarely mentioned Alaska during his travels around the state. He asked reporters, "What if I only spend six years here? . . . I want to look back and feel good about what I've done." Stevens dominated the sessions, and the committee reported the bill, remarkably similar to that of the previous year, after twelve sessions, with Tsongas casting the sole dissenting vote to preserve the right to offer substantive amendments. The Carter administration seemed pleased that the committee reported the bill, and singled out Tsongas especially, thanking him for leading the effort in the committee to strengthen the bill, even though he had

¹¹ Richard Arenberg, Memo to Tsongas, 2 October 1979 Box 176E, TC.

opposed its final form. A few days later a blue-ribbon commission for the state of Alaska pronounced it “livable.”¹²

The Alaska Coalition condemned the committee bill as “unacceptable.” Believing that many senators would have no option but to support the House bill and work to defeat the Senate committee bill’s revisions, Tsongas and Senator William Roth (R-DE) introduced Amendment 626, a substitute to the committee bill. The substitute measure resembled H.R. 39, but Tsongas had attempted to address concerns that Stevens had voiced during committee markup sessions. The Alaska Coalition endorsed the substitute and its chair, Chuck Clusen, lauded it as “a statesman-like response designed to accommodate opponents of the House bill by adopting many of their proposals.” Gravel made it clear to constituents in Alaska that he would resist any time agreements or other measures to limit his ability to filibuster “should substantial damaging amendments occur.” Senator Jackson downplayed the differences between the committee bill and H.R. 39, asserting that the main disagreement lay in their respective treatments of the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPR). To bolster their argument for opening ANWR for oil exploration, the proponents of the committee bill had excluded the area in favor of separate legislation that Jackson authored. After Tsongas introduced his substitute, Amendment 626, Jackson and Mark Hatfield (D-OR) urged him to support the committee bill. Gravel threatened to filibuster it, so Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd (D-WV) postponed the floor debate until the next session.¹³

¹² Brockton, Massachusetts, Enterprise, 27 October 1979 (“What”); White House Press Release, 30 October 1979; The Washington Star, 31 October 1979 (“livable”).

¹³ The Washington Star, 31 October 1979 (“unacceptable”); Congressional Record, 15 November 1979; Letter from Jackson and Marc O. Hatfield to Tsongas, 16 November 1979; Minot, ND News, 30 November 1979; “Alaska Status Report,” Alaska Coalition Congressional Services, 4 December 1979 (“a statesman-like,” “should”).

Public criticism of the Tsongas substitute centered on two main issues. First, and least important, some questioned the right of the federal government to any land—an easy argument to counter and one that had few real proponents outside of Alaska and the western states involved with the “Sagebrush Rebellion.” Many westerners argued that the federal government, the Bureau of Land Management in particular, had mismanaged federal lands. So they attempted to seize federal lands in the interests of local development. Proponents of the movement used the Alaska lands issue to emphasize their plight. Second, and far more important, were concerns about making oil deposits unavailable. Nobody really knew how much oil lay under the ground of ANWR, but many believed that quantity was not important. To the editor of the Mobile Register, “The overriding fact is that there is a great deal . . . and the only practical question should be: ‘How soon can we get it out?’” He concluded, “To continue blocking our access to those resources in today’s international atmosphere of crisis smacks of treason.” Most observers voiced more reasonable concerns. At the end of November, Senator Tom Eagleton (D-MO) voiced concern about locking up “potentially energy-rich lands without some kind of study and evidence that there is not a hidden Prudhoe Bay.” He acknowledged that the substitute opened all but 5 percent of Alaska lands for oil exploration, but conceded, nonetheless, that “Alaska’s beauty needs to be preserved for our future generations. Alaska’s oil needs to be explored for our energy future.” Throughout December and January newspaper editorials spoke of “unleashing the Alaskan oil giant” to “bring an end to gas lines.”¹⁴

¹⁴ The Sheridan Wyoming Press, 6 November 1979; Congressional Record, 30 November 1979 (“potentially,” “Alaska’s”); The Mobile Register, 10 December 1979 (“the over-riding,” “to continue”); The Indianapolis Star, 13 December 1979 (“unleashing”); Silver City Record, 10 January 1980 (“bring”); Anchorage Times, 19 January 1980

Tsongas also wanted to know how much oil the area reasonably held, but he initially trusted the figures of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), which estimated Alaska's total potential reserves at somewhere between twenty-two and fifty-nine billion barrels. Some industry experts estimated as much as six hundred billion barrels. The Alaska Coalition's consulting geologist guessed that the Arctic National Wildlife Range contained less than a billion barrels, less than six weeks' worth of oil at the contemporary rate of consumption. The Coalition pointed to NPRA as a much more promising source—a position with which the American Petroleum Institute had previously agreed. The Alaska Coalition considered the energy issue in the Alaska lands bill “a smokescreen for a weaker bill in general.” Based on the information he had, Tsongas believed that the substitute bill ensured that areas with the highest potential would be available for exploration. Speaking from the Senate floor in December, he argued, “It is uncertain whether there is oil beneath the Range in economically recoverable quantities. What is starkly self-evident is the value of the Porcupine Caribou herd there, and the subsistence needs of the Native cultures dependent on the herd's survival.” He attempted to balance development with preservation. Oil and gas companies continued to lobby Congress and the administration, and in January the state of Alaska circulated a rebuttal to the Alaska Coalition's arguments. In February the Alaska Coalition responded point-by-point to the state's arguments.¹⁵

At the start of the 1980 congressional session a resolution seemed unlikely. The state of Alaska had decided to oppose the committee bill, partially based upon energy considerations. Alaska's treasury had accumulated a surplus of more than a billion dollars in

¹⁵ Energy and the Alaska Lands Bill: A Summary Prepared by Patrick L. Dobby, Consulting Geologist for the Alaska Coalition, with comments on “Solutions to the National Energy Crisis—Why Not Alaska? By Commonwealth North,” 6 December 1979 (“a smokescreen”); Congressional Record, 19 December 1979 (“It is uncertain”); Roy Jones interview, 19 October 2003.

the previous year. Since Alaskan oil prices were tied to world prices, which had increased markedly throughout 1979, the state's share of royalties and severance taxes accounted for 70 percent of its revenue, enough to cover operating expenses and still provide each Alaskan with a check for almost three thousand dollars. In late January, two members of the Alaska House of Representatives introduced a resolution opposing the committee bill and urging the Alaska delegation to kill it. They primarily objected to its limitation on the state's ability to select land in ANWR for petroleum extraction. The committee bill allowed limited drilling on a limited number of acres, but only if the land remained federally owned. The state of Alaska received a much larger percentage of oil revenue from state lands—90 versus 25 percent—than did other states. But the state attempted to work quietly to convince Stevens and Gravel to oppose the committee bill, since that portion of the Statehood Act lacked firm legal underpinnings. Gravel indicated that he would not support the committee bill if the Senate amended it substantially on the floor, and several substantive amendments—including the Tsongas substitute—had already been introduced. Gravel faced a difficult election campaign in November, and if either the Tsongas substitute or the committee bill passed, a large cross-section of voters would be unhappy with him. Most other senators involved in the issue wanted to move on to other matters. Tsongas wanted a bill passed early in the year before it became inextricably linked to election-year campaigning. Everyone believed, however, that if Congress did not pass legislation before the end of the session, it would likely not even appear on the floor in 1981.¹⁶

The breakdown in Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty (SALT) II negotiations opened some time on the Senate calendar to permit consideration of the bill, especially after

¹⁶ New York Times, 24 November 1979; Congressional Quarterly, 5 January 1980; Anchorage Daily News, 9 February 1980.

December, when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. In early February, Stevens claimed that the uncertainty around the continuing hostage crisis in Iran and the invasion of Afghanistan created an opportunity for floor debate. He believed that foreign crises had focused the nation's attention on the need to ensure domestic supplies of energy, and, discussing the matter with his colleagues, he became convinced that he had the votes to defeat the substitute. The Carter administration pressured Majority Leader Byrd to schedule the bill, and Interior Secretary Andrus threatened twenty-year extensions of FLPMA withdrawals. Byrd and Jackson also wanted the bill to come to the floor, as did the ranking minority member, Mark O. Hatfield (R-OR). So, on February 5, with Stevens's consent, Byrd attempted to introduce the committee bill to the Senate floor. Gravel threatened a filibuster, claiming that "the time just isn't right." Stevens sought to discuss the issue with him as well. Stevens wanted to get the committee bill into a House-Senate conference committee, and believed that he could even get some favorable amendments before it got there. But then he wanted to limit amendments and hoped that he could forge an understanding to preclude amendments to the committee bill after the failure of an up-or-down vote on the Tsongas substitute.¹⁷

Two days later, Gravel and Byrd called Tsongas, Stevens, and Jackson. Gravel and Byrd had crafted a time agreement for floor action on the bill that they claimed would help to avert a filibuster. Tsongas would receive a time limit on debate and could offer his substitute after the consideration of amendments. The Alaskan senators, in exchange, got limitations on amendments to the committee bill and an agreement that the bill would not hit the floor for debate until after July 4, when it would become the first order of business

¹⁷ [Anchorage Times](#), 5 February 1980; [Anchorage Daily News](#), 8 February 1980.

after the Republican national convention. Tsongas could offer five amendments, while Jackson, Stevens, Durkin, and Gravel could offer three each. After a while they moved the discussion to the Senate floor to solidify their understanding. The main bone of contention concerned the issue of germaneness, primarily because Stevens wanted to ensure that the amendments to the committee bill would not include the National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska (NPRA). Stevens believed that the committee's exclusion of NPRA put pressure on Congress to open ANWR. He argued to bar amendments that included geographical areas not in the committee bill. Tsongas had been discussing the time agreement with Secretary Andrus over the phone when Stevens first brought up NPRA, and Durkin attempted to brief Tsongas, who nevertheless still wanted to hear from Stevens directly. Stevens then told him, "We are talking about the NPRA. That is not in the Senate bill." A few minutes later Stevens added that there were "a lot of other [geographic] areas" about which he remained concerned, but he declined to name any. Tsongas did not want to give too much away in the time agreement, and although he had not consulted with the Alaska Coalition or even his own staff, he offered to allow Stevens to examine the amendments before he offered them. Stevens asked, "Do they include the Pet-4 reserve in Alaska [part of NPRA]?" Stevens reminded him that Jackson had specifically wanted to exclude the area so that the conference committee could deal with it. Durkin stepped in. "There was almost unanimity that we should encourage more drilling in the Pet-4 reserve to take the pressure off Beaufort Sea," he said, "which is going to have a blowout and wipe out God knows what the way the Interior Department is going." Durkin and Tsongas tried to re-word the agreement to placate Stevens, but he remained concerned. Tsongas asked, "Is the Senator concerned about a particular amendment?" Stevens responded again that his concern centered upon

NPRA, which he regarded as “a confederal item” that “ought to be considered between the two Houses.” Stevens added that he was also a little worried about interior forests. “I have no idea what your amendment does with that,” he added. “That makes two of us,” Tsongas replied. Durkin suggested they table the issue until the morning, but when Stevens pressed again for a resolution, they finally decided that, if any party to the time agreement felt that an amendment “betrayed” his understanding, he would express his opinion to the majority and minority party leaders, who would make the final decision as to whether to vitiate the agreement.¹⁸

Stevens and Gravel were delighted with the understanding and trumpeted the delay to the Alaska press. Stevens declared, “I thought the longest we could delay was May.” Gravel added, “If everything goes to hell in a handbasket, we could probably stop a bill coming out of conference at the end of the session, well into September.” The Alaska senators wanted to delay for several reasons. They believed it would increase pressure on their opponents to compromise, particularly since they expected the energy crisis to worsen. They also wanted to solidify their commitments on the committee bill and sensed that more time would allow them to mount an effective opposition to each amendment separately. And they believed that amendments would allow senators who were not part of the energy committee to feel that their pet issues had received attention. Their remarks to the Alaska press irritated Tsongas, who believed the agreement had been executed in good faith, and he was surprised to see the two senators discussing ways to delay a bill for another congressional session.

¹⁸ Congressional Record, 7 February 1980 (qtns.); Boston Globe, 29 February 1980; Robert Cahn, The Fight to Save Wild Alaska (Washington D.C.: The Audubon Society, 1982), 26.

Gravel apologized to Tsongas immediately, assuring him that he hoped “that compromise legislation acceptable to both sides can be arrived at.”¹⁹

The Alaska Coalition, incensed by the delay, called it “irresponsible in light of the large blocks of time available in March” and pleaded with the senators to reconsider their agreement. Two days later Secretary Andrus, “very concerned” that “the lateness of that date will lead to a stalemate,” extended FLPMA protection for an additional twenty years on forty million acres. Andrus warned Alaskans that, unless Congress acted, they would miss another hunting season in the National Monument areas of the state. The state of Alaska immediately filed in the U.S. District Court to block the federal order extending the withdrawals. Some Alaskans had expected the time agreement to prevent Andrus’s action. Gravel charged Andrus with acting in “extreme bad faith,” although Andrus had never indicated that he would not extend the protections, and indeed had threatened to do the reverse if it looked as if legislation would be delayed. Alaska’s Governor Hammond called the extension of protections “an arrogant use of executive power.” Alaska’s single U.S. Representative, Donald Young, called Andrus’s actions “immoral” and “unjustifiable” and claimed that “if [Alaska] were any other state in the union [it would] be at war.” Jackson took Andrus’s actions in stride, calling them consistent with what the secretary had told them he would do in September.²⁰

¹⁹ Congressional Record, Anchorage Daily News, (“I thought,” “if everything”); Gravel letter to Tsongas, 8 February 1980, Box 131C, TC.

²⁰ Anchorage Daily News, 8 February 1980; Alaska Coalition, “The Time Agreement: No Action for Five Months,” 12 February 1980 (“irresponsible”); Anchorage Times, 12 February 1980; Henry M. Jackson Press Release, 12 February 1980, Box 134A, TC; Department of the Interior News Release, 12 February 1980 (“very,” “the lateness”), Box 131C, TC; Anchorage Times, 13 February 1980 (“extreme,” “an arrogant,” “immoral,” “unjustifiable,” “if”).

Toward the end of February, Stevens began to regret the time agreement, wishing that the floor debate could occur instead in April or May. He reasoned that debating the bill right after the Republican convention, but before the Democratic convention, might make senators reluctant to undermine Carter. The Republican nominee would surely oppose the Tsongas substitute and make the bill the “first political issue of the 1980 campaign.” Senate leaders discussed the possibility, but they realized that Stevens and Gravel would probably have to give up the ability to filibuster the bill in the conference committee to get Tsongas to renegotiate. Stevens indicated his willingness to forgo the possibility of filibustering in conference, but Gravel seemed to be unwilling to part with that option. Fearing that if Tsongas won significant amendments there would be no conference to filibuster, the lieutenant governor and the state’s chief lobbyist met with Tsongas and Stevens to explore the position of oil and gas lands in the substitute measure.²¹

Tsongas possessed a nuanced, complicated vision of legislative issues that defied simple dichotomies like conservation versus development. And his positions changed according to his perception of political, economic, and technological realities. Although he had always advocated conservation, and declared, “You can’t put a caribou in the gas tank,” the Iranian hostage situation and the Afghanistan invasion scared him. The “Carter Doctrine,” pledging U.S. involvement if oil interests in the Persian Gulf were threatened, gave him pause. Neither people nor caribou would survive a nuclear war. Tsongas also realized that he had to balance various types of resource development against one another. In February 1980, engaging in just such a balancing act on a controversial issue that affected

²¹ Anchorage Daily News, 14 February 1980; Anchorage Daily News, 28 February 1980; Anchorage Times, (“first”) 28 February 1980; Roy Jones memo to Tsongas, 21 February 1980, Box 130A, TC; American Association of Petroleum Geologists Explorer, March 1980.

his state, Tsongas chaired hearings on the economic and environmental impacts of oil and gas leasing on the George's Bank area of the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). The Department of the Interior had planned OCS leasing in the area since 1975, but a suit brought by the Conservation Law Foundation and Massachusetts Attorney General Francis X. Bellotti had postponed such action. After the case reached the appellate court, the Conservation Law Foundation and others nominated the area for marine sanctuary status, and the National Ocean and Atmosphere Administration (NOAA) prepared an issue paper and held workshops on the proposal. The Department of the Interior agreed to delete some of the most critical lobster and coral grounds from the lease sales and to impose protective safeguards into the lease contracts in exchange for stopping attempts to designate the area a marine sanctuary. Then, Bellotti filed suit to delay lease sale #52 and place more restrictions upon drilling on #42, irritating Andrus, who believed that the state had broken an agreement to let the lease sales proceed unmolested. Tsongas's hearings were also expected to determine the manner in which future leases would occur, including the impending and much larger lease sale #52.²²

Tsongas organized the hearings to discuss the possibility of balancing four factors: the economic importance of the fisheries at risk, the oil and gas potential in the area, the effects of extracting oil and gas upon organisms in the area, and the adequacy of government programs protecting one from the other. Although fishing industry representatives brought legitimate concerns to the hearings, oil industry representatives seemed unprepared to

²² Hearing before the Select Committee on Small Business and the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the Subcommittee on Energy Resources, United States Senate, Ninety-Sixth Congress, Second Session, on Impact of Offshore Oil and Gas Development on Georges Bank, Boston, Massachusetts, 29 February 1980; Gloucester Daily Times, 8; Lowell Sun, 27 February; American Association of Petroleum Geologists Explorer, March 1980 ("you can't").

counter their objections. A Mobil Corporation representative noted studies on oil platforms in the Gulf of Mexico that had shown increasing fish stocks, but came ill-equipped to deal with concerns about debris that would keep commercial fishing via towed gear from completing routes on hundreds of square miles of the bank. And the industry seemed particularly unprepared to deal with a spill. Oil companies planned to begin drilling exploratory wells and knew with relative certainty what type of boat was necessary to clean up a possible spill, but no company had ordered one and none existed on the Atlantic coast. A spill would devastate the fishing industry. Most boats fishing the bank carried large loans because the industry had grown rapidly following the recovery of stocks depleted by international over-fishing in the 1960s and early 1970s. The industry appeared to be thriving, but one spill would bankrupt it. Mobil Oil Corporation's manager of environmental affairs countered that the impact of a spill would not be catastrophic and would be unlikely in any case. Tsongas later asked Interior Secretary Andrus to postpone lease sale #52 pending more studies, but Andrus was under considerable pressure to lease OCS areas all over the United States. States, including Alaska, Massachusetts, and Texas, universally resisted offshore development. Tsongas, Lowell Weicker (D-CT) and Ted Kennedy (D-MA) introduced the George's Bank Protection Act soon after the hearings. The hearings demonstrated Tsongas's human-centered vision for conservation, weighing economic interests against economic interests, balancing one type of resource extraction against another. Such human-centered conservation was very different from what the Alaska Coalition advocated and probably made them nervous about Tsongas's role in the coming floor debate.²³

²³ Hearing; Oil and Gas Journal, 1 October 1979; "Fact Sheet on George's Bank Field Hearings, Boston

During the spring, Tsongas spent substantial time on energy policy legislation, with great success. Having initiated legislation for a conservation bank and a solar energy bank in 1979, he shepherded both through his two committees: Energy and Natural Resources and Banking, and Housing and Urban Affairs. The bills, combined into the Solar Energy and Conservation Bank Act, passed and, in June, Carter signed the legislation. Tsongas also initiated a bill encouraging local government efforts toward energy efficiency; he held hearings on the bill and shepherded it through committee consideration. Tsongas and aide Mitch Tyson also worked to create research funding for nuclear fusion, which at that time many believed would provide nuclear power without the radiation dangers of nuclear fission. His efforts to push utilities into considering conservation measures continued to yield benefits. New England Electric created a load management and conservation program to cut demand growth by 10 percent. The company joined Northeast Utilities in planning several small hydropower facilities. Boston Edison began to examine ways to create power from municipal solid waste. All of these companies had begun energy audits to increase energy efficiency for businesses and consumers. Despite these successes, Tsongas believed that the country as a whole, and Massachusetts in particular, had a long way to go in conserving energy. Recognizing the interconnectedness of the energy issue to other issues he devoted considerable time and attention in the spring to creating “The Massachusetts Plan,” a comprehensive proposal that codified much of what he had been concerned about over his years in Congress. Tsongas’s entire staff participated in the final stages of the work, devoting two entire weeks in March to the plan. It outlined 256 recommendations for various levels of government, organized around five basic parameters: conservation and renewable energy sources; high-technology industrial growth emphasizing services;

transportation; development of urban areas instead of suburban sprawl; and quality-of-life issues. When he introduced the plan on April 10 most of the press attention centered upon the fact that Tsongas advocated nuclear power as a continuing source of energy in Massachusetts. The Lawrence Eagle-Tribune greeted the plan with the headline, “Tsongas to back Carter, N-power.” The Boston Globe headline read, “N-power, gas tax lead Tsongas energy plan.” Although a few papers outlined Tsongas’s plan more carefully, Tsongas’s Boston office received a flood of calls critical or supportive of his “new position” on nuclear power. Callers learned that his position had not changed. The report specified that he could support nuclear power once conservation and renewables were used to their fullest extent possible. State officials received the plan favorably, believing that they had already begun to implement most of the ideas in it—they understood well his position. Tsongas embarked upon a series of events, speeches, and meetings to clarify and promote the plan.²⁴

In late April, his speech and town meetings changed focus abruptly. Responding to increasing public pressure to take action in the Iranian hostage situation, the Carter administration mounted a rescue attempt that ended in disaster. Suddenly, virtually everyone wanted to talk about Iran. Other repercussions for Tsongas had started the day before when Jimmy Carter asked Secretary of State Cyrus Vance to meet with religious leaders in response to their pleas to avoid military action against Iran. When Vance declined, Carter and he both understood his action as the direct refusal of an official presidential order; Vance resigned

²⁴ Quincy Patriot Ledger, 14 March 1980; Undated Nancy Guilmartin memo to Mitch Tyson, Box 12 D, TC; Lynn Daily Evening Item and Amherst Morning Record, 10, 14 March 1980; Fitchburg-Leominster Sentinel and Enterprise, 10, 15 March 1980; Boston Globe (“N-power”), 11 March 1980; Lawrence Eagle Tribune, 11 (“Tsongas”), 29 March 1980; Boston Herald American, 11 March 1980; Gloucester Daily Times and Taunton Daily Gazette, 12 March 1980; Tri-town Transcript, 16 March 1980; Holyoke Daily Transcript Telegram, 19 March 1980.

later that day. With Vance's resignation, Carter chose Senator Edwin Muskie (D-ME) as the new Secretary of State. Muskie's departure opened a seat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, for which Tsongas immediately began to lobby. The failed hostage rescue also affected Carter's standing in the polls, which, in turn, beginning in June, affected the pending Alaska lands bill. Conservationists began to place far more importance upon passage of a bill, while Alaska state officials increasingly believed that they might fare better under a Republican president. The Alaskan oil lobbying group Commonwealth North changed its position in June, claiming that it was "unwise for Alaska's energy and strategic mineral resources to be unavailable at any time of national need and international peril." The group asked senators to "defer action until this issue of great national importance can be addressed in a more dispassionate, informed manner." Stevens still voiced support for a bill, but increasingly Senator Gravel, facing a difficult primary fight in Alaska, voiced opposition.²⁵

Alaska's chief lobbyist for the lands bill, John Katz, asked the state legislature for seven million dollars. He planned to use almost five million of the amount for advertisements targeted to states of undecided senators. Oil companies also placed large eight-page color advertisements in newspapers. Art Kennedy, a Republican candidate for Gravel's seat, urged the Alaska legislature to threaten shutting off the flow of oil from the Alaska pipeline. Despite considerable trepidation about becoming reliant upon an undependable source of revenue, the state of Alaska became so overwhelmed with cash—reaching a budget surplus approaching three billion dollars by April—that its legislature repealed its income tax. It funded Katz's proposal and began providing refunds of the previous year's taxes and

²⁵ Jimmy Carter, Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President (New York: Bantam Books, 1982), 513; Springfield Republican, 27 April 1980; Springfield Morning Union, 2 May 1980; New York Times, 14 May 1980; Telegram from Max Model, President of Commonwealth North to Tsongas, 19 June 1980 ("unwise"), Box 130A, TC; Oil Daily, 30 June 1980.

bonuses to citizens. In April Husky Oil Company made a significant discovery in NPRA which would reportedly provide two million barrels of oil per day. Stevens sought a bureaucratic shortcut to open NPRA for Husky. But Congress had to appropriate funds to continue the leasing arrangements on the land. In early June, Stevens tried another gambit, offering to withhold his three amendments if Tsongas withheld his five. Tsongas declined.²⁶

Newspaper editors across the country seemed to favor a bill. The Washington Post pointed to the battle over Idaho's River of No Return Wilderness and, quoting Frank Church (D-ID), argued that the debate represented "a fight to preserve for all time a part of the vanishing American frontier." As the Senate debate approached, editorials pointed to various reasons to support either significant amendments to the committee bill or the Tsongas substitute. Some characterized the coming floor debate as a battle between development and conservation, some as a state's rights issue. Some characterized it as a battle between energy interests and the environmental lobby, others as a battle between the national interest and three congressmen from Alaska, and others as a fight between consumption and conservation. Still others saw a battle between a coalition of industries engaged in resource extraction against the national interest. Some, like the St. Louis Post Dispatch and the Dallas Times-Herald, suspected that the opposition's energy arguments were propaganda, intended to overshadow more important issues in the bill, such as that of state vs. federal management of fish and wildlife, access across federal lands, limits on the timber industry, and the boundaries of protected areas. The Alaska Coalition seemed to be winning the battle for national public opinion. Many editorials reacted against oil industry-

²⁶ Anchorage Times, 22, 24 April 1980; St. Paul Dispatch, 29 May 1980; St Paul Pioneer Press, 1 June 1980; Seattle Sun-Times; Toledo Blade, Anchorage Times, 2 June 1980; Daily News-Miner, Fairbanks, Alaska, 4, 25 June 1980; Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind, 299.

financed advertisements. Others pointed out the connection between oil money and the state of Alaska's lobbying efforts, pointing to "an embarrassment of riches" in the statehouse. Many specifically cited data showing that the amount of oil land under dispute would be insignificant to resolving the problems of the energy crunch. Senator Gravel characterized the debate as "the next great battle between the preservationists and those who favor economic growth." He was up against Paul Tsongas, a preservationist who cared about economic growth.²⁷

Just before the scheduled debate, the Department of the Interior released a new study examining the potential of the NPRA and showing a 50-percent probability of five billion barrels of oil and nine trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Andrus urged that senators open the land to development of this "important potential source of oil and gas" that could be extracted "with acceptable environmental risks." Environmentalists and the oil industry had become skeptical of each others' estimates of proven reserves increasingly following the 1973-1974 oil embargo. Each side suspected the other of lying and of manipulating government agency estimates as well. As the Alaska lands debate intensified many disbelieved any estimates but their own.²⁸

²⁷ Scottsdale Progress, 9 June 1980; Kokomo Tribune, 19 June 1980; Hammond (Indiana) Times, 30 June 1980; St. Louis Post Dispatch, 2 July 1980; Dallas Times-Herald, 3 July 1980; Arkansas Gazette, 5 July 1980; The Atlanta Journal and Constitution, 6 July 1980; Memphis, Tennessee Commercial Appeal, 6 July 1980 ("an embarrassment of riches"); Columbia South Carolina Record, 7 July 1980; Austin American Statesman, 9 July 1980; Bergen New Jersey Record, 11 July 1980; Oregon Journal, 12 July 1980; The Oregonian, 13 July 1980; Minneapolis Tribune, 13 July 1980; Sarasota Herald-Tribune, 14 July 1980; Washington Post, 14 July 1980; Rochester, Minnesota Post-Bulletin, 16 July 1980; Boston Globe, 17 July 1980; Chicago Tribune, 18 July 1980; Oregon Journal; Washington Post, ("a fight"); New York Times, ("the next") 22 July 1980.

²⁸ Department of the Interior News Release, 17 July 1980; Aaron Wildavsky and Ellen Tannenbaum, The Politics of Mistrust: Estimating American Oil and Gas Resources (Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications, 1981), 297-315.

In his acceptance speech before the Republican national convention in Detroit the same day, Ronald Reagan echoed Andrus. “Those who preside over the worst energy shortage in our history tell us to use less, so that we will run out of oil, gasoline and natural gas a little more slowly.” He told conventioners, “Conservation is desirable, of course, for we must not waste energy,” but conservation was not the whole answer. “America must get to work producing more energy.” Reagan’s energy agenda was based, like his economic programs, on growth, not conservation. “Large amounts of oil and natural gas lie beneath our land and off our shores,” Reagan declared. But these deposits, he warned, remained “untouched because the present administration seems to believe the American people would rather see more regulation, taxes, and controls than more energy.” Carter spent much of Monday, July 21 on the phone attempting to persuade uncertain senators to vote for the Tsongas amendments, reminding them that “preserving the priceless heritage of Alaska’s natural resources is my number one environmental priority.”²⁹

On July 22, the Senate began deliberating the Tsongas amendments. Not surprisingly, debate quickly centered on oil. Stevens, irritable from the start, bristled about the fact that President Carter had renamed ANWR the William O. Douglas Wildlife Refuge, which he thought inappropriate—Douglas had never seen it. He then questioned conservationist “propaganda” about mineral leasing. Stevens noted that the first amendment under consideration closed all refuges in the state to the Mineral Leasing Act. Since refuges made up more than 5 percent of state land, he asked, “How could possibly 95 percent of the oil and gas potential of Alaska be opened if all of the refuges are closed?” Tsongas argued that

²⁹ Department of the Interior News Release, 17 July 1980 (“important”); *Washington Post*, 18 July 1980 (“those,” “Conservation,” “America,” “Large,” “untouched”); *Christian Science Monitor*, 24 July 1980 (“Preserving”).

the issue really concerned areas that could reasonably yield oil and gas, not all areas of the state. They began to argue over various oil reports issued over the years by the Department of the Interior, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the Comptroller General of the U.S., who was expected to issue yet another report that day. Tsongas suggested that the Senate postpone the debate about oil and gas potential until he introduced the amendment concerning wilderness designations. When Tsongas asked Senator Gary Hart (D-CO) to call up his amendment, Stevens bristled again, arguing that “the Senator from Colorado has no amendment to call up.” Tsongas had allowed a number of other senators to sponsor amendments in his place and introduce them to demonstrate their concern for national interest lands during the election year. Stevens allowed Hart to introduce his amendment only after assurances that it would count as one of Tsongas’s. When Hart introduced the forty-six page amendment, he asked consent to waive its reading. After Gravel objected, senators listened silently to the clerk reading the text in its entirety, stumbling repeatedly over difficult-to-pronounce Indian names. After the reading, Hart argued that the bill restored important areas to the wildlife refuge system which allowed the area to qualify as watershed-based ecological units. Most importantly, according to Hart, the amendment restored about four million acres to ANWR, which Hart called the “crown jewel of the National Wildlife Refuge System.” Stevens argued that the amendment also substantially changed the system of management for refuges, leaving the question of whether or not drilling could take place up to the sole discretion of the Secretary of the Interior. He also contended that that management change would apply to all states, not just Alaska.³⁰

³⁰ Congressional Record, 22 July 1980, S 9483-S 9486.

After some debate, Tsongas attempted to address Stevens's concerns. Although he and other proponents of Hart's amendment believed that there was no substantive difference between the management provisions of the area in it and the committee bill, he asked for unanimous consent to change the language so that they would match. Senator Hatfield (D-OR) objected. At that point, Gravel attempted to persuade Hatfield to allow the reconciliation of Hart's amendment's management provisions, but Hatfield would not. Stevens brought up a more serious matter, germaneness, which would vitiate the time agreement. He argued that the amendment "goes far beyond the committee bill." Stevens proceeded to other points of disagreement and then tried to raise a point of order. He had, however, to yield the floor to Gravel, who asked him to persuade Hatfield to allow Tsongas to amend the bill to match the management provisions in the committee version. Stevens objected. When Gravel tried to introduce another change in the bill, a provision for a hydroelectric dam, Hart asked whether continued debate on minor points was "academic" considering the fact that Stevens would soon attempt to get the entire amendment ruled non-germane. Gravel stepped in again, arguing, "In case this abortion becomes law, I want it as painless as possible." He then argued that Tsongas had gone back on his word. "I do not understand why, after the Senator has agreed in committee that he would not touch this dam, he now surgically comes to the floor with this." Stevens supported Gravel, arguing that Tsongas had betrayed them by setting new precedents for land management, even though Tsongas had offered to expunge the offending language and substitute that of the committee bill.³¹

³¹ Ibid, S 9486-S 9522.

Tsongas yielded time to Senator Church, who then argued the merits of the amendment. Church pointed out that the amendment would lower the percentage of revenue that the state received from oil and gas extraction from 90 to 25 percent and entered a summary of the bill's highlights into the record. After a few others spoke to the bill's merits all of the senators ran out of time and Hart offered a secondary amendment that addressed Stevens's concerns about setting a precedent in land management. Stevens submitted more clarifications and eventually Jackson moved to table the amendment. The motion to table failed 64-33. Senator John Melcher (D-MT) attempted to introduce another secondary amendment, which the Senate rejected 66-30. Jackson brought up another substitute amendment and arguments began on that one. Senator Bennett Johnston (D-LA) argued that the Hart-Chafee amendment "locked up" important areas for oil and gas extraction. He took issue directly with Tsongas: "I say to those who think we can solve the energy problems of this country while locking up vast areas . . . while insisting on non-burning of coal and shutting down our nuclear plants and all the other energy resources . . . we have to make . . . a compromise, a sacrifice." Tsongas asked him to point to the areas on the map under consideration as oil and gas resources. Johnston, unfamiliar with the geological map in the Senate well, deferred to Jackson. Tsongas then called the oil and gas issue a "red herring." "Is the Porcupine National Forest in the dark [area of] proven hydrocarbon reserves?" he asked rhetorically. "No." Stevens asked to which map Tsongas referred and then argued that Tsongas's was inadequate. Tsongas claimed that the area under question was not an area favorable to hydrocarbon potential. When Stevens asked if this was simply because there had been no drilling in the area, Tsongas replied that oil companies only drilled in areas where they believed they would, based upon geological

considerations, be likely to find oil. Stevens responded that the Carter administration had put together the maps that Tsongas used to determine hydrocarbon potential specifically to bolster arguments for the refuge. Tsongas, incredulous, asked him to reiterate his argument. Stevens called the map “a policy level map prepared to win an argument on the floor of the House of Representatives and the floor of the Senate.” Arguments on the third secondary amendment grew even more heated. At one point several senators shouted, “Vote.” Tsongas asked his opponents to think “very carefully” about using secondary amendments as a dilatory tactic. John Chafee (R-RI) asked for a vote. Again, the motion to table failed almost two-to-one.³²

Stevens became outraged at Senate support for the first Tsongas amendment. He felt that it violated existing compromises, issues that had already been decided. He announced another secondary amendment and suggested that he had “a series of amendments” to offer subsequently. When Tsongas asked how many secondary amendments he intended to offer, Stevens estimated that he had eighteen. At that point, Senator Hart countered Stevens’s earlier charges that the Tsongas amendments appropriated land that the state of Alaska had already withdrawn from consideration. A particularly heated argument ensued, where Hart persistently argued that the bill before the Senate was the only instrument that could yield the state land, and Stevens adamantly maintained that compromises were in effect. When Hart argued that he had not been a party to any such compromise, Stevens became increasingly angry and defensive. The principal negotiating parties agreed to discuss the bill that evening and the Senate moved to consider other business.³³

³² Ibid, S 9522-S 9534.

³³ Ibid, 9534-9546.

When discussion resumed the next day Stevens apologized to Tsongas for saying that he had gone back on an agreement. Then Stevens clarified his position, declaring that the ad-hoc committee considering the bill in 1978 had made compromises that ceded land to the state of Alaska. To take any of those lands into federal management, he asserted, would be “unconscionable.” Hart bristled at Stevens calling his amendment “unconscionable” and dug in his heels, reiterating that he did not consider himself bound by an agreement that he had not been party to and was not yet a law. Stevens stormed off the floor. Gravel tried to reinforce Stevens’s arguments, but the Majority Leader called a recess, then another.³⁴

Tsongas was taken aback by Stevens’s anger and sought him out in his office. Together they worked toward a resolution, settling the important details off the Senate floor with their staffs. The next day senator Gravel attempted once again to reinforce the argument that previous agreements, like that of the ad-hoc conference of 1978, still retained validity. He asked for a recess to attempt to weigh Stevens’s arguments about the federal government’s right to preempt state-selected lands, a process that would begin “years and years of litigation . . . as a result of this horrendous and unfortunate piece of legislation.” The Majority Leader took the bill off the floor. For the next few weeks, Senate aides conferred in Senator Jackson’s house. Eventually calling themselves “the Alaska Hostages,” they tried to work out a series of compromises to the committee bill that would stand a chance with Stevens. Periodically the group reached an impasse and called key senators. Stevens and Tsongas would arrive and reassure them about the wonderful progress they were making. The Alaska Hostages considered all titles to the committee bill, and had to consider the goals of H.R. 39 as well, since the bill would, if it bypassed a Gravel filibuster,

³⁴ Congressional Record, 23 July 1980, S 9584-S 9592.

still have to survive a conference. More than anything else, Tsongas wanted to avoid a conference.³⁵

Observers were horrified at the spectacle of the July 22 debates. The Washington Post called it a “brawl.” Philip Shabecoff of the New York Times lamented that the important legislation was being debated “with all the amiability and spirit of cooperation of a confrontation between two enraged grizzly bears.” Senator Hart believed that the Alaska Hostages needed to reach an agreement quickly. Stevens was a little more optimistic, believing that it might take more than a week to iron out differences. He also stated flatly that his demands about state lands already selected would not be negotiable.³⁶

On Wednesday night, July 25, Senators Jackson, Hatfield, Stevens and Tsongas met in Byrd’s office, to iron out some points of disagreement that the staffs could not settle. Gravel met instead with reporters, arguing, “If we can stop it this year, we can start with a better climate next year.” Increasingly, environmentalists argued that senators should kill the bill. Having picked up votes that they had not expected to carry on July 22, they felt they were in a strong bargaining position. Charles Clusen claimed that the Coalition wanted a bill. “But,” he added, “we’re not desperate.” If no bill passed, the Antiquities Act and the FLPMA withdrawals would protect the land. Stevens, Jackson, Tsongas, and Byrd agreed to work towards another substitute bill based upon the committee version, which would come

³⁵ Congressional Record, 23 July 1980, S 9590-S 9604; Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October 2003; New York Times, 23 July 1980; Christian Science Monitor, 23 July 1980; Christian Science Monitor, 24 July 1980.

³⁶ New York Times, 24 July 1980; Washington Post, 25 July 1980 (“brawl”).

to the floor and receive an immediate vote. “I think we could go on a week or two this way and still be effective,” Stevens declared upon leaving Byrd’s office.³⁷

A few days later the senators briefed Alaska Coalition leaders, representatives Morris Udall and John Seiberling, and state of Alaska officials on a tentative agreement they had reached. Alaska Coalition leaders were unsatisfied, since the bill reflected the committee version. Udall and Seiberling provided lists of major problems with the bill but indicated that they were ready to negotiate. Alaska governor Hammond asked Stevens to kill the bill. Stevens argued that he had “argued and argued and argued and won no concessions,” and left the talks that night. Clusen said that he would wait for a written bill before taking a final position, but hinted that “whatever they agreed to this afternoon is not enough.” He argued that he might have to join Gravel’s call for a filibuster.³⁸

A master of understatement, Tsongas told reporters, “The middle ground on this issue is very narrow.” Environmentalists were increasingly critical of Tsongas, and nervous about the closed-door meetings, with good reason. Increasingly, Tsongas had made concessions that alienated them. Peter Sleeper, a columnist for the Lowell Sun who had followed Tsongas’s career for some time, called the closed-door negotiations a learning experience for the others involved in the issue. “Deal Tsongas in,” he alleged, “and sooner or later he’s calling the shots.” With Clusen considering support for a Gravel filibuster, Tsongas no longer felt that he needed to honor his commitments to the Alaska Coalition. Tsongas pointed out that “both sides are arguing for no bill” but that he was committed to finding a legislative resolution. “The issue is bringing on board the House without losing our group,”

³⁷ Washington Post, 25 July 1980.

³⁸ Sierra Club, National News Report, 8 August 1980; Washington Post, 30 July 1980 (“argued,” “whatever”).

he said. But his group no longer included the Coalition. On July 30 Stevens met with a group of Alaskans at a meeting Gravel hosted and tried to convince it that the compromise would be better than living with the monuments. Some Alaskans threatened an election to recall Stevens “if he didn’t behave.” Stevens countered that he understood that his political future was on the line, but that he was “not subject to threats.” Gravel was subject to threats, however. His primary election, against a tough opponent, loomed. Stevens pointed at him from across the table and said “Mike has his position. I have mine.” Gravel believed that his only hope for re-election lay in killing the bill. He had risen in the polls against his Democratic challenger by eighteen points, placing him nine points ahead in the first week of August. He remained behind the Republican candidate, however, and Republicans viewed him as the most vulnerable senator.³⁹

On August 4, after incorporating some of the concerns of House leaders, Tsongas introduced another substitute bill on the Senate floor. It was based on the energy committee’s bill, S. 9, but it provided almost as much area in the national park system as the House bill. But much of this land was not as well protected, since it would be in the form of park preserves rather than national parks. Moreover, the bill reduced the area under wildlife refuges by 26 million acres and the wilderness provisions were weaker. Tsongas agreed to table his other amendments and attempted to brief the Senate on the confusing issue. “We think we have arrived at an accommodation from which everyone is equally dissatisfied, which suggests perhaps that we have arrived at something that might make sense.” Tsongas tabled the Hart amendment then under consideration and told his colleagues that he did not

³⁹ Marginal notes on Boston Globe editorial, 25 July 1980; Washington Post, 31 July 1980 (The middle”); Lowell Sun, 19 August 1980; Richard Arenberg interview, 24 October, 2003; Lowell Sun, 30 July 1980 (“both,” “Deal”); Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report, 2 August 1980 (“The issue,” “if he,” “not,” “Mike”); Washington Post, 3 August 1980.

intend to offer his remaining four amendments, but he would if negotiations broke down. Immediately, Gravel attempted to delay the introduction of the substitute. Other senators became angry with Gravel, but Tsongas stepped in several times to grant his requests and to yield him more time for discussion. Stevens, in particular, had little patience for Gravel's tactics. He warned Gravel that he feared Tsongas would be able to introduce his original substitute and he saw no way to prevent him from doing so. "My colleague apparently thinks he has some way to prevent" the Tsongas substitute "from coming up, and I wish him well," Stevens warned, "because I studied it. I know of no way to prevent it." Gravel then charged others with excluding him from meetings about the bill and they all argued heatedly. Eventually they came to a tentative agreement that Tsongas would offer his new substitute on August 5, but even this concession required heated arguments about the necessity of having printed copies available the previous night for all to review. Gravel felt rushed, but so did many others. Some wanted to check the language to ensure that their constituents were properly represented in the three-hundred-page bill. Senator Harry Byrd (I-VA) noted that Tsongas and others had worked on the bill for weeks but that most senators had not been party to the negotiations. "I would be glad to change places with some of you," Tsongas retorted.⁴⁰

The new compromise substitute authorized seismic oil and gas studies of ANWR beginning after two years. To protect the Porcupine Caribou herds and the native Alaskans who hunted and fished for subsistence in the area, it mandated a thorough review of the effects of the seismic studies upon fish and wildlife and their habitats. The seismic studies could only occur in the winter months when caribou were not calving. Congress would

⁴⁰ Congressional Record, 4 August 1980, S 10657-S 10713.

decide six years after the bill passed whether to proceed with full-scale exploration. The bill also substantially increased the designated wilderness area in ANWR, from 38.2 in the committee bill to 56.2 million acres, although still far short of H.R. 39's 67.5 acres. Tsongas was convinced, as were many other senators, that it was better to know more about the resources. He had met in June with representatives of a company that claimed to be able to map oil deposits aerially. Perhaps there would be no need to perform seismic tests. Oil and gas extraction in ANWR could only proceed as the knowledge about its effects on the area grew. With better knowledge, future legislators could attempt to open the range, if needed, through congressional action, or keep it closed.⁴¹

Most expected the bill to pass that day, and environmental groups prepared to oppose it. After the Alaska Coalition reviewed the new substitute, Charles Clusen announced that the group could not accept it as a "final product." To satisfy the Coalition, the bill would have to go to conference. The day before, Udall had announced that he saw acceptance of the bill as necessarily "a deliberative, two-step process." Dr. Edgar Wayburn, chair of the Sierra Club's Alaska Task Force, listed several points of disagreement with the new substitute. He praised Tsongas's work, but he and others argued that conference would be necessary.⁴²

In the morning Gravel mounted a monumental effort to delay the bill. When Tsongas and Gravel met the next morning on the Senate floor, only two others were present, Bennett Johnston (who presided) and Robert Byrd. Byrd suggested the absence of a quorum and asked that the time be charged equally to those subject to the time agreement, which

⁴¹ Irving A. Backman letter to Tsongas, 2 June 1980, Box 131 C, TC; Richard Arenberg interview 24 October; Roy Jones interview, 4 November 2003.

⁴² Sierra Club National News Report, 8 August, 1980.

immediately incensed Gravel. “My time is very precious” he protested, and he asked that his time be charged to Hatfield and Jackson, since they had not yet arrived. Tsongas did not want the time charged to the others, though, and suggested that it be charged equally to all five key senators. To change the rules of the time agreement would allow anyone to delay the proceedings by walking out. Gravel denied that he intended to delay the proceedings, saying that he had the right to have the other principals present. Tsongas remarked that he “had spent a good part” of his senatorial career “speaking to an empty chamber.” Gravel retorted that he was trying to “improve on the quality of his career.” After the others arrived, Tsongas introduced amendment 1501, the new substitute. Gravel attempted to engage the others in a debate about the effect of denying hunting in an area where it had previously been legal. He baited them, saying that no studies yet existed and charging that the senators would not debate his point out of a sense of “shame.” Tsongas rose to speak and Gravel yielded the floor. Tsongas noted that his response to Gravel’s arguments against the bill would take only five to ten minutes, and would come at the end, just before time on the amendment lapsed. “Today’s key words are going to be ‘shame’ and what is the other one?” he asked, turning to Gravel. When Gravel replied, “I’ll think of some others,” the gallery, packed full with Alaskans who supported him, erupted in laughter. “This is supposed to be a debating society to illuminate issues,” Gravel stipulated, and he launched another attack on Tsongas’s refusal to answer his objections. Tsongas asked to whom his time was being charged. Upon being informed that the time was his, Tsongas noted that, if he was “going to be eviscerated,” he would rather it “be done on someone else’s time.” He parried with good humor Gravel’s repeated attempts to delay the proceedings. At one point Tsongas responded to Gravel, who had been born in Springfield, Massachusetts: “Whenever

the Senator desires to return to the state of his birth, I would be prepared to welcome him and do everything that is necessary to make him feel at home.”⁴³

Gravel’s efforts to delay the bill grated on the nerves of other senators more quickly. After castigating Tsongas and others for refusing to engage in a debate with him, Gravel initiated an incredibly confusing argument about how time should be charged under the time agreement. He followed this tactic with repeated objections, quorum calls, points of order, parliamentary inquiries, motions to instruct (requests to the Sergeant of Arms to compel the attendance of absent senators), questions and appeals about the rules and the dispensation of time, calls for yeas and nays, and even a motion to table his own motions to reconsider the vote by which his own appeal was tabled. He initiated thirteen quorum calls, which averaged twenty minutes each. At one point Arizona senator Barry Goldwater tried to find a way to permit members of the Intelligence Committee to attend an important meeting without having a rollcall vote charged against them, and found that the time agreement did not allow for that to occur. Goldwater noted that the Senate would be adjourning the next day and stormed, “We are all going to be mighty sorry that we engaged in this horseplay all afternoon and not in the business of America.” Applause erupted from the increasingly irritated and bored galleries. After seemingly endless roll and quorum calls, Senator Robert Byrd declared that he would enter a cloture motion on the committee substitute, which would end the debate. It was the first filing of cloture motion under a unanimous-consent time agreement. By that time senators were so confused that Byrd asked for a few moments so that they could step back and make sure that they were making the decisions they intended to make.

⁴³ Congressional Record, 5 August 1980, S 10778-S 10788.

They sparred a little about the new precedent that Gravel claimed cloture would set, and then adjourned until after the Democratic party's national convention.⁴⁴

Back in session on August 18, the Senate invoked cloture with a 63-25 vote, allowed Gravel to introduce his amendments, and voted them down, expecting to meet again the next day to pass the new substitute. Tsongas believed that the cloture vote signified “an absence of credible outcry” against the bill. Gravel pledged not to attempt further to delay passage of the substitute. He did so expecting to have three more chances to filibuster the bill, before, during, and after conference. Tsongas was confident, however, that the House would pass the Senate's version. On August 19 the Senate passed the bill, renamed H.R. 39, by a 78-14 vote. Secretary Andrus indicated that the President would sign the bill if it passed the House. Alaska Coalition chair Charles Clusen pointed to the provision allowing seismic testing in ANWR as the chief problem remaining in the bill. Clusen noted that he would wait to see House action before deciding whether or not to oppose the bill. Tsongas and Jackson urged the House not to amend the bill. Stevens and Gravel pledged to filibuster any conference report. Udall began to work toward another solution immediately, saying, “There's no reason not to play the ninth inning just because the first eight have been so hard.”⁴⁵

Throughout September the House and Senate worked to produce a compromise bill, but negotiations broke down by October, when Udall, Tom Evans (R-DE), Thomas Ashley (D-OH), Philip Burton (D-CA), and Seiberling introduced a package of amendments to

⁴⁴ Congressional Record, 5 August 1980, S 10788-S 10797 (qtns.); Richard Arenberg memo to Staff, 13 August 1980, Box 2C, TC.

⁴⁵ Congressional Record, 18 August 1980, S 11038-S 11141; 19 August 1980, S 11183-S 11210; Washington Post, 19 (“an absence”), 20, 21 (“there's”), August 1980.

strengthen the bill. Udall also introduced a bill to postpone a final vote until after the election. But after the election of Ronald Reagan in November, resistance quickly died. In November's lame-duck session of Congress, even the Sierra Club seemed willing to compromise with the substitute measure. Wayburn concluded that "in the sometimes circuitous peregrinations of American democracy it seems the best we can muster in November 1980." The Alaska Coalition joined him, calling it "a major step in the settlement of the Alaska lands issue," albeit with "major shortcomings." Even Udall finally admitted that with Reagan's election a worse bill might emerge in the next legislative session. Although he pledged to amend the law in the next session, he said, "Realistically the Senate bill is the only option." Stevens also pledged to continue the fight with further amendments. On November 12, the House passed the Senate bill and Carter signed it December 2.⁴⁶

In July, Interior Secretary Andrus had correctly declared the Alaska lands bill "the last great conservation bill of this century." Without Tsongas's efforts, ANILCA would not have been passed that year. He secured a time agreement early in the year that postponed legislative action until late in the session. Without the time agreement, the Alaska delegation could have postponed consideration until after the presidential election. Moreover, Tsongas continued to press for a legislative resolution after Senator Stevens walked off the Senate floor. At that point, Tsongas knew that the bill would never make it through a conference committee; there would be no opportunity to improve it later. ANILCA would have looked very different if passed during the Reagan presidency, with James Watt heading the Department of the Interior.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Sierra, November 1980; Washington Post, 13 November 1980.

⁴⁷ Springfield Daily News, 22 July 1980.

The congressional resolution of the Alaska lands issue coincided with the beginning of the end of the energy crisis as well. On September 22, the Iran-Iraq war started a chain of events that brought the energy crisis to a conclusion. Both combatants ceased oil exports, but Alaskan supply, combined with commitments from Saudi Arabia, bought enough time for the International Energy Administration (IEA) to forestall a new oil shock. Oil buyers had hoarded supplies since the 1979 crisis, so IEA members agreed to draw those stocks down gradually, rather than driving prices up even higher with panic-buying. Soon the high prices, combined with a newly restrictive anti-inflationary monetary policy in the United States, forced consumers to conserve fuel. They conserved their way into a worldwide recession.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Daniel Yergin, The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money, and Power (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991), 711-714.

EPILOGUE

Paul Tsongas believed in shifting with political and economic realities. Although he retained many of his longstanding concerns, decreased urgency, combined with the Reagan administration's active opposition to conservation and research and development of renewable energy sources, brought an end to Tsongas's constant preoccupation with energy policy. Reagan tried, albeit unsuccessfully, to dismantle the Department of Energy. During the 1980s, support for solar and renewable energy research at the Department of Energy dropped by 93 percent in constant dollars. Between 1981 and 1987, support for energy conservation fell by 91 percent. Tsongas responded to the more pressing problem of the economic recession of the early Eighties with an all-out effort for industrial policy to combat the rapidly escalating current account deficit. He also spent more time on foreign policy. Having finally achieved his dream of a seat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he sought ways to prevent nuclear war.³¹⁰

Tsongas also spent a great deal of time trying to move the Democratic party in a new direction. In the spring of 1980 the liberal political organization Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) had invited him to deliver the keynote address to its annual June convention. Written in three hours, Tsongas's speech had called upon liberals to chart a new course, one more consistent with the changing world. Liberals had responded to current issues in the 1960s, Tsongas claimed. As a result, many liberal causes seemed less relevant. "Young citizens," he charged, "have not grown up reading about hungry poor people; they have read about abuses in the food stamp program." Senator Daniel P. Moynihan (D-NY) quipped,

³¹⁰ Walter A. Rosenbaum, *Energy, Politics, and Public Policy* (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press, 1987) 8-9; Michael E. Kraft, *Environmental Policy and Politics* (New York: Longman, 1993), 149.

“Paul, that was the best speech to the ADA since mine in 1967.” Other liberal colleagues were also complimentary. After the 1980 election Tsongas’s speech seemed prophetic. He spent a great deal of time over the next year incorporating his insights into The Road From Here: Liberalism and Realities in the 1980s, which briefly appeared on bestseller lists.³¹¹

On September 29, 1983, Tsongas felt a strange lump in his groin. He went to a doctor thinking it was a hernia, which he feared might keep him from running the Boston Marathon the coming spring. About a week later a biopsy revealed malignant cancerous cells. A few days later the full diagnosis came—a non-Hodgkins lymphoma, of a type that had never been cured. Doctors told him that he might live eight more years. In early January, 1984, he announced that he would not stand for reelection. He wanted to spend more time with his family and would move back to Lowell. Tsongas wrote about his experiences during the first few months of the disease, publishing the account, Heading Home, while still in the Senate. Tsongas received a flood of mail from cancer patients and survivors who had read his very candid account and found it inspirational.

Tsongas joined the Boston law firm of Foley, Hoag and Eliot, and served on a number of corporate and community boards while he grew weaker. By fall 1985 he began to cough and lost weight. He checked into the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute for chemotherapy treatments. After those failed to improve his condition, doctors offered him experimental bone-marrow transplant and radiation treatments. He jumped at the opportunity. The procedures put Tsongas in the hospital for six weeks but destroyed his cancer. He returned

³¹¹ Christian Science Monitor, 18 June 1980; 8, 9 July 1980; New York Times, 15, 30 (“young,” “many”) June 1980; Boston Globe, 3 July 1980 (“Paul”); Medford Daily Mercury, 4 June 1980; Lowell Sun, 3, 6 July 1980; Yarmouth Sun, 23 July 1980; Washington Post, 27 June 1980; 8 July 1980; 1 August 1980; Lowell Sun, 14 August 1980.

to his practice and his board work—which now included the board of Dana-Farber—and gradually returned to frenetic involvement in local politics and cultural life.

In 1990, Tsongas became strong enough to exercise. He started swimming again, joining a YMCA Masters competition. In 1991, as part of a co-ed relay team he set a 200-meter freestyle record in the senior adult division. Dismayed with the direction the country was headed, he decided to reenter politics. In March, 1991, with President George H. W. Bush's approval rating at 91 percent, Tsongas declared his candidacy for the presidency. His main goal in running was to offer a new Democratic message in favor of economic growth, fiscal responsibility, and “an aggressively inclusive social agenda.” Much of the money raised for the campaign went towards printing costs for Tsongas's campaign manifesto, “A Call to Economic Arms.” He won ten primaries and caucuses to Bill Clinton's thirteen when he decided to drop out of the race. He did not want to be a spoiler, and Clinton had picked up his message of economic growth and fiscal responsibility. Tsongas won 20 percent of the primary vote in New York after he had dropped out of the race.³¹²

Tsongas returned to Lowell, his legal practice, and his civic involvement. In 1992, after appearing with Don Henly at a benefit concert to save Walden Woods, Tsongas met with Senator Warren Rudman (R-NH) in the nearby Colonial Inn, and the two started the Concord Coalition. The Coalition lobbied for deficit reduction and later published a plan for ending the federal budget deficit by 2000. Tsongas brought public art projects to Lowell. He also helped bring a minor league baseball team, the Lowell Spinners, to town.³¹³

³¹² Paul Tsongas, *Journey of Purpose* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1995), 18-24; Paul Tsongas, *Heading Home* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), iii-ix.

³¹³ Tsongas, *Journey*, 45-49.

Paul Tsongas died January 18, 1997 of pneumonia—brought on, according to his doctors, by complications from his cancer treatments. He was 55 years old.

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