

Senata Paul Bongar — 1-28-84

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Thought you'd like to have the Goodman
enclosed news clipping for your records art. ✓
if you didn't have it already. The column
appeared in the middle of the OP-ED page
of the L.A. Times, Orange County edition.
Couldn't miss it.

And the poem sums up my thoughts.
We all admire you. Maybe I'll
see you in Lowell when I return.

Best wishes

Paul Marion

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"I view my approach as
compassionate realism.
Can you imagine a bumper
sticker with those words
on it?" — Paul Tsongas

MERRIMACK MEANS STRONG PLACE

It's January, California,
I have beach sand under my nails
as I tear open the carton
stuffed with birthday shirts,
pistachios from Market Street,
and two-week-old SUNs
telling of Paul Tsongas leaving the Senate.
Headlines had crossed the country:
a bulletin on Larry King's show,
a clip on MacNeil-Lehrer,
Ellen Goodman in the L.A. Times,
but the hometown paper is epic —
Armand, Joe, Fred responding;
the victory scene in Tatsios';
photos of Paul in Nicaragua, Israel,
with Tip and Ted in Washington;
and a family portrait, all smiles —
Nikki, Ashley, Katina, and Molly.

Lowell — what a hold it has.
Gone is the complaint, "Let's get out."
The paint is fresh.
A Senator lives there.
And we cry for the favorite son,
throw him a thousand ropes
hung with get-well cards
that read, "Be with us a long time."
There's an aerial shot of the river,
in the Higgins picture book:
the Merrimack, at its summer level,
easing through the valley,
gets held up by the dam,
spills through, thins out,
sneaking between the rocks,
then emerges whole
in a wide, quiet, sparkly basin,
right up against the city,
in no hurry for the ocean.

Paul Marion

PM
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