

SENATOR PAUL TSONGAS
"The Will to Survive"
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We have always looked to our young people to play an important role in focusing attention on the problems of the day.

In the 60's it was the students in colleges and universities who refused to be silenced in their protest of an unjust war. The Vietnam War was a confrontation where human lives were mercilessly held hostage to an uncertain balance in world politics.

Once again, the balance of world politics and human values is in flux. The future of the world is governed by our unyielding dependence on oil as an energy resource. I can think of no greater challenge for us all, than to become actively involved in reversing that crippling dependence.

When our parents were reaching young adulthood, as you are now, there were fewer options open to them at this juncture in life. Getting out of college meant getting into a career - - often any job that would pay the bills and provide for the needs of family and future.

For those of you finishing your ~~four year~~ stop at Bradford, today brings a much larger list of far more complicated choices to make about your future - - choices uninfluenced by war or economic depression. X

On the other hand, your freedom to choose is also more restricted. You are the first generation to reach adulthood in an age of resource limits-- where the talk is not of plenty but of scarcity. We are faced with water shortages, energy shortages, diminishing clean air and open space and the decimation of our forest and wildlife.

Pressure on you is literally increasing by the minute. By the year 2000, world population, which is increasing by 172 people every 60 seconds, will have doubled in a mere forty years. Couple that forecast with the problems predicted for food production. Our farmlands are being paved over, strip mined and eroded. The push is already on to relax environmental standards so that lower quality (high sulphur) fuels can be burned. Nuclear power and

the breeder reactor are still considered energy options because we have not developed other alternatives to fossil fuel resources.

I could go on and on but the point is this: today is a day for you to feel good about yourselves and to celebrate your accomplishment but, it is also a day to think seriously about the choices you can make about your own future.

I submit to you that your future and mine are inextricably linked to our willingness to address the energy situation.

Back in 1977, President Carter termed the energy crisis "the moral equivalent of war". Well, he declared the existence of a war but it is one we are not close to winning -- even after two years of skirmishes. Our commitment to the fight to end our dependence on oil and coal is unenthusiastic to say the least. In fact, most of the people in this country don't even believe we should be fighting such a battle in the first place.

Unlike the Vietnam War, this battle is one which deserves our earnest commitment and it is a fight which will test our mettle and our will to survive.

In the ^{60's} ~~50's~~, we faced the challenge of putting men into space. It was something that had never been done before. The push to succeed became an ultimatum that was met with a sincere commitment of creative energies.

Today, the challenge the energy situation presents us is almost incomprehensible. Energy, its use and the generation of it, affects everything we do. To meet the current challenge you and I will have to be willing to do two things: (1) work with other people to demand and implement solutions to our energy needs, and (2) explore new approaches to solving these problems -- approaches which at first may sound as far out as the space program's goal of sending men to the moon sounded in the 50's.

We are not yet fully equipped to wage a winning war against energy. One reason is because not enough people have joined the battle. There just doesn't seem to be much of an "energy constituency" these days even though there is a "Detroit lobby", an "oil lobby", and the like.

When ^{many} ~~most~~ of you were ~~seniors~~ in high school we were all going through the "Energy Crisis" caused by the 1974 Arab oil embargo. Well, I guess we are now going through "Energy Crisis Number Two". Those past five years show that we cannot look to government alone for an answer to the energy problem. I'm willing to admit this even though as your Senator, I'm part of that government. But, I also want to tell you that we will only develop a comprehensive energy plan if you-- as students, teachers, parents and workers-- choose to provide leadership. There will be changes made only if you, the individuals, decide to work together to show that you want to manage and influence your future-- that you have the will to survive. < ?

Individuals can make the difference. Let me give you an example:

A law student in the late 1960's used to hitchhike long distances during vacations. After seeing hundreds of car wrecks and the human carnage from them, he started studying what he called "the second collision" in an accident--the collision when the passenger hits the car. His name was Ralph Nadar and his work since then has saved thousands of lives.

My three years in the Peace Corps taught me that you can never predict just when your individual effort will make a major difference. I have re-learned the lesson many times since then.

The choice before you is between a lifestyle which holds onto the way things are and a lifestyle in which you are determined to find out how to preserve your environment for the future-- the future of your sisters and brothers, the future of their children and of your own. You are entering the workplace at a time when the urge to satisfy "me first" must give way to a concern for "them too". < not ending