

Spring, 1983

SENATOR

Paul Tsongas Reports

Tsongas Urges Further Jobs Legislation



At a Boston meeting of the International Ladies Garment Workers in April, Senator Tsongas consults with union officials (left to right), Ronald Alman, Walter Gaul and Carl Proper.

Dear Friends,

Some brightening is evident on an economic horizon that has looked gray and bleak far too long. While the economy is still in precarious condition, national statistics show a pickup in orders for such raw materials as steel and paperboard. Housing construction is on the rebound. In the first quarter of 1983 the economy expanded at a 3.1 percent rate.

Most importantly, some laid-off workers are back on the job. The General Motors plant in Framingham, for example, has recalled about half of its 4000 idled workers. On March 14 the first car manufactured there in five months rolled off the assembly line.

These are the hopeful signs for the 240,000 Massachusetts citizens still out of work. Yet it is still far from clear that these trends will prove robust enough to restore our economy to good health. Consumers are still shying away from major purchases, apparently unconvinced that the recovery is for real.

They have reason to be cautious. Looming Federal deficits of almost \$190 billion for the next fiscal year threaten to short-circuit the recovery by forcing interest rates back up. The Administration's proposed budget is no help. It offers a double whammy of massive increases in military spending and further Kemp-Roth tax cuts that will lock us into large deficits for a long time to come.

The Administration's unwillingness to compromise on the budget leaves us on a tightrope. What economic improvement we have seen so far is primarily a result of falling interest rates on business loans, if not consumer loans. But these gains will be short-lived unless there is progress in cutting the huge budget deficit and in adopting effective policies to rebuild the competitiveness of United States industry. We need long-term solutions, and we need them now.

Sincerely,

Senator Tsongas is urging Congressional action to boost United States employment beyond the scope of the \$4.7 billion jobs bill passed in March.

While Senator Tsongas strongly supported the bill that will put an estimated 400,000 Americans back to work -- many of them in the hard-pressed construction industry -- he is also advocating additional legislation to reemploy more of the nation's 11.5 million jobless.

"This bill is only a small shot in the arm to treat what is a severe and chronic ill," he said in a statement for the Congressional Record before the final vote.

He called for long-lasting efforts to create "new economic opportunities" and to improve "the competitiveness of existing enterprises."

"We will need to expand access to education and job training so that more Americans can qualify for the knowledge-intensive jobs that will predominate," he said. "We need to encourage firms to invest in workers, as they currently do in plant and equipment. They ought to provide enough worker training and retraining to help workers prepare for the jobs of the future."

During consideration of the jobs bill in the Senate, Senator Tsongas backed an amendment by Senator Levin of Michigan to add \$1.7 billion in appropriations, which would have generated an additional 280,000 jobs nationwide. But that measure failed on a 53-to-34 vote.

Senator Tsongas succeeded in adding an amendment of his own. It provides for a Commission on National Service to study ways of expanding opportunities for voluntary service in organizations such as the Peace Corps and VISTA. This bill would lead to important job training and work

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Bills Bolstering Technology Urged

Senator Tsongas is pressing for passage of his legislative package to toughen United States industry technologically in the face of sharp economic challenges from Japan and other nations.

Included in the package are bills to upgrade education and training in technology-related fields, to concentrate resources on promising technologies and to encourage product development by allowing companies to undertake joint research efforts.

The bills are designed to boost the emerging high-technology industries of Massachusetts and to invigorate basic industries manufacturing everything from autos to shoes.

In a Boston speech last May, Senator Tsongas announced the start of his initiative to meet the Japanese challenge.

"The issue is United States competitiveness in the world," he said. "There is reason for alarm because the Japanese are beating us in many areas. . . We must meet the challenge...."

Tsongas Rated 100% by Labor

Senator Tsongas' votes during the 97th Congress, covering 1981 and 1982, earned him a 100 percent rating from the AFL-CIO. Issues on which he was rated include:

- Providing emergency Funds for unemployment Compensation
- Preventing illegal immigration and protecting wage standards
- Saving railroad retiree pensions
- Protecting federal workers' pensions
- Saving union publications from accelerated postage rate hikes
- Assisting airline employees made jobless by mergers
- Opposing an arbitrary constitutional mandate of a balanced budget
- Preventing GOP-threatened cuts in Social Security
- Restoring to the budget such federal programs as job safety and health care
- Defending Medicare and Medicaid from deeper cuts
- Upgrading educational programs to achieve greater opportunity
- Raising workers' taxes to pay for 1981 tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy
- Overriding a Presidential veto regarding such budgetary matters as extension of unemployment benefits

In the past year, Senator Tsongas has authored an array of legislation that he believes can sharpen America's competitive edge.

One bill, the Economically Strategic Research and Development Act, would bolster development of technologies critical to American economic health.

The proposal is a response to the government targeted and subsidized research and development plans of Japan, France and other industrialized nations.

The legislation would authorize an independent panel of experts to identify economically promising technologies that face intense competition because of government sponsored research and development abroad.

For any promising technology, the panel would devise a blueprint for maximizing United States competitiveness. A targeted technology, for example, might be electron-beam welding that could improve the quality of United States shipbuilding, or it might be new uses of ceramics in ball bearings or aircraft engines -- all of which could help domestic industries and preserve jobs in Massachusetts.

A second bill, the High Technology Morrill Act, would strengthen education and training.

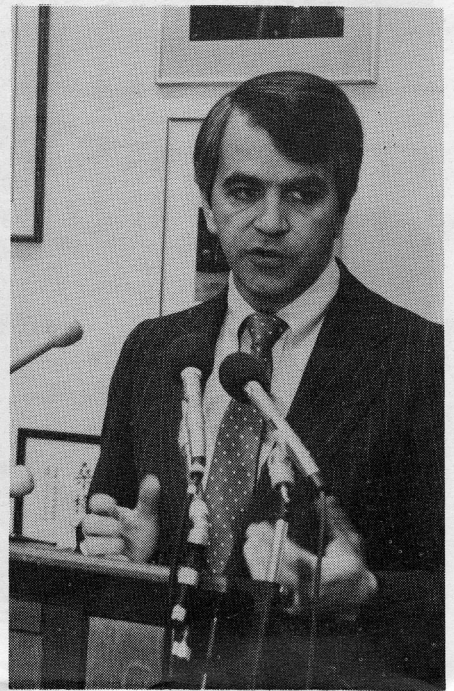
The bill is named for the Morrill Act of 1862, which established land-grant colleges across the country with a mandate to improve American agriculture. Under Senator Tsongas' proposal, revenue from the sale of Federal oil and natural gas resources would finance up to 50 percent of the cost of programs to ensure that our workforce has the skills required.

"The issue is United States competitiveness in the world. There is reason for alarm."

Matching money would come from industry and state governments.

Another technology-related bill already introduced in the Senate by Senator Tsongas is the Joint Research and Development Ventures Act. The bill would spur development in areas where the risks or costs now make it prohibitive.

The Massachusetts shoes and textile industries, for example, might benefit from joint research ventures into laser-cutting technology that could make their machinery more efficient.



Senator Tsongas answers questions at press conference on his High Technology Morrill Act.

Measure Widens Jobless Benefits

An amendment offered by Senator Tsongas and passed by Congress in March has broadened the rules covering eligibility for unemployment benefits.

A wrinkle in the law had resulted in a more stringent standard for jobless workers seeking the 14 weeks of supplemental benefits than for those applying for the first 30 weeks of regular unemployment benefits.

In some states, including Massachusetts, jobless workers hospitalized with a life-threatening condition or serving jury duty have lost supplemental benefits because they were unable to meet tough job-search requirements. Workers seeking regular unemployment benefits can be exempted from such requirements for reasons of hardship.

The amendment introduced in the Senate by Senator Tsongas extends the exemption to those seeking supplemental benefits. The amendment was authored by Massachusetts Congressman Silvio Conte, who introduced it in the House of Representatives.

In supporting the amendment on the Senate floor, Senator Tsongas said he wanted to insure that "the unemployed of every state are treated fairly and are not penalized for circumstances beyond their control."

Senator Tsongas also supported legislation that Congress passed in March to add an extra eight weeks of supplemental benefits for those whose unemployment benefits expired before March 31.

About 30,000 Massachusetts residents will be eligible for the extended supplemental benefits, according to state officials.

Letter Questions OSHA Actions

Alarmed by indications that the Federal government might slacken rules protecting workers from occupational injury and disease, Senator Tsongas has expressed his concern to Labor Secretary Raymond Donovan.

In January Senator Tsongas joined with 10 other senators in writing a letter to Secretary Donovan protesting threatened watering down of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards.

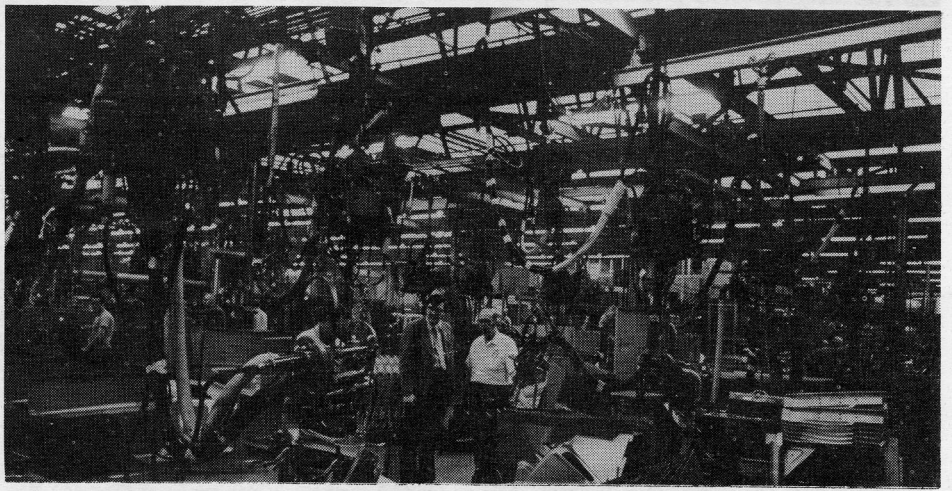
The letter complained that OSHA appeared to be "radically revising health and safety standards at a time when the agency's inspection and enforcement activities have significantly declined."

The letter cited OSHA proposals to reduce significantly the number of substances it classifies as toxic, to restrict workers' access to health records and to ease penalties for violations of the agency's regulations.

"We would appreciate clarification of a recent OSHA announcement," the letter added, "to . . . postpone publication lists of cancer-causing agents. We are concerned that this action will undermine OSHA's ability to inform the public of cancer-causing substances and to issue regulations for carcinogenic substances."

The OSHA regulations, covering virtually every employer in the nation, seek to keep the workplaces of America free of hazards to workers' health and safety.

Though Senator Tsongas supports reasonable efforts to streamline unnecessary or burdensome Federal regulations, he is concerned that OSHA, in its zeal to lessen the regulatory burden on business, may be undercutting the agency's effectiveness.



Inspector for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration checks on factory conditions.

New Synfuels Mandate Sought

Senator Tsongas is seeking a broader mandate for the Synthetic Fuels Corporation so it can offer financial assistance for projects such as district heating and cooling and conversion of municipal waste to energy.

In district heating and cooling, waste heat from a power plant is piped to other locations for heating and other purposes. Municipal waste-to-energy plants burn urban refuse to produce steam and generate electricity.

Neither technology is eligible for assistance from the Synthetic Fuels Corporation, which is limited to subsidizing development of such things as coal gasification and liquefaction.

Both district heating and cooling and conversion of municipal waste to energy offer important energy-producing efficiencies and job-creating opportunities. Both are of particular advantage to Massachusetts, which relies heavily on imported oil for much of its energy needs.

Legislation sponsored by Senator Tsongas and 14 other senators would make both technologies eligible for loan and price guarantees and loan subsidies. Such incentives are important for encouraging investment

in the two technologies. Though profitable over the lifetime of a project, both have high startup costs.

The bill is backed by the AFL-CIO, United States Conference of Mayors, National League of Cities, National Association of Counties and Consumer Energy Council, among other organizations.

In endorsing the measure, the AFL-CIO said: "Its enactment will promote the development of valuable alternative sources of energy, assist the communities using these new sources and create new job opportunities."

District heating expands employment by triggering construction and the manufacture of pipe and equipment. A recent study by Argonne National Laboratory found that district heating projects are twice as labor intensive as coal-fired plants and synfuels projects.

Municipal waste-to-energy projects are an alternative to landfill sites, which are increasingly scarce in Massachusetts.

Both technologies would enhance development prospects of communities that adopt them by ensuring a reliable energy source at a stable price.

Tsongas Backing More Repair of Public Facilities

Senator Tsongas is calling for further Federal help to rescue the nation's highways, mass transit systems and water and sewer facilities from further decline.

With his support, Congress passed legislation late in 1982 that provides an additional \$3.4 billion in Federal funds for improvements in the public infrastructure. The money will pay for \$200 million worth of sorely needed construction in Massachusetts, creating jobs for an estimated 20,000 workers.

But Senator Tsongas is proposing additional legislation to meet the still enormous need for repair and improvement of the nation's public facilities.

He believes the time to attend to these matters is now. "Years of deferred maintenance have left many roads, bridges and water systems in desperate condition," he wrote in a recent newspaper article. "The longer we wait to make these repairs, the more they will cost."

Delay in repairing public facilities is causing great waste. The city of Boston, for example, estimates that 17 percent of the water pumped into its pipes is lost, largely because of leaks.

Senator Tsongas is cosponsoring two bills in the Senate to encourage greater Federal support of the public infrastructure.

The first is the Federal Cap-

ital Investment Act. It would create a National Commission on Public Improvements, which would inventory public-works needs region by region, establish priorities among the needs and recommend financing schemes.

Secondly, Senator Tsongas is supporting a \$10 billion proposal to create state-run banks to loan money to cities and towns for improvements in local roads and other public works.

He views such measures as a means not only to help finance the public infrastructure on which our economy depends for its lifeblood, but also as a way of providing much needed jobs throughout Massachusetts.

TAKX Contract Buoy Hopes at Quincy Shipyard

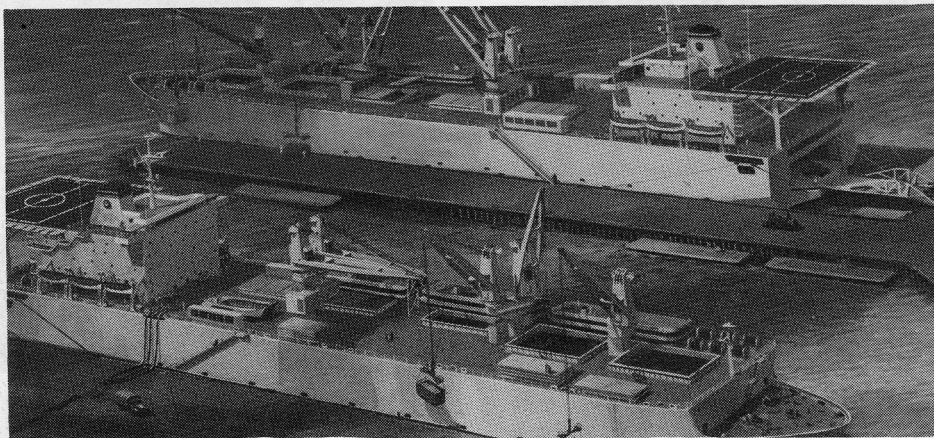
Hard times have taken a toll on the General Dynamics shipyard in Quincy, but prospects are improving because of the company's plans to build five Navy ships there beginning this fall.

The order for five Maritime Prepositioning Ships (TAKX) will put 1700 laid-off workers back on the job and result in the hiring of more than 1000 additional workers at the shipyard. Employment is expected to expand from 2200 to 5000.

Construction of the TAKX ships, which will provide sealift support for the Navy's Rapid Deployment Force, is worth \$770 million in business for the Quincy facility.

In naming Quincy for the TAKX contract, the Navy picked a shipyard known for quality and an excellent workforce. The yard has extensive experience in constructing a wide variety of ocean-going vessels. Over the years, it has acquired a reputation for completing its work on time and within its budget.

These are points that Senator Tsongas, as well as other members of the Massachusetts



Picture shows artist's sketch of Maritime Prepositioning Ships to be built at the General Dynamics Shipyard in Quincy.

Congressional delegation, expressed to the Defense Department last year during consideration of bids on the TAKX.

Despite Quincy's reputation for excellence, the Navy has overlooked it in awarding a number of recent contracts -- even where the General Dynamics bid has been competitive in price.

Senator Tsongas, however, is convinced that the Quincy shipyard has an important role to play in helping to service the 600-ship Navy planned by the Pentagon in

building and maintaining barges, coal colliers and other vessels used by the American maritime industry. He recognizes the value of the Quincy shipyard to Massachusetts as an industrial resource and as a source of thousands of jobs offering superior wages and benefits, as well as training programs for skilled and semiskilled workers.

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experience for unemployed teenagers.

The legislation passed by Congress and signed into law by the President also provides \$100 million for food, shelter and other humanitarian aid for victims of the United States economic recession.

A portion of the bill is similar to the Homeless Relief Act, which Senator Tsongas introduced in the Senate early this year. The Homeless Relief Act outlined a program of emergency assistance for the growing number of families left homeless as a result of the prolonged recession.

Included in another section of the bill is a \$4.4 million appropriation to pay for mass transit improvements in the Boston area.

Other funds will pay for a range of transportation projects across the state, among them the rehabilitation of the Cape Cod Railroad between Attleboro and Hyannis.

Staff Serving You

If Massachusetts residents run into red tape dealing with a Federal agency, whether it is the Department of Education, the Veterans Administration, the Department of Labor or some other, they are invited to seek information and help from Senator Tsongas' Boston staff. Telephone 617-223-1890 or write: Office of Senator Paul E. Tsongas, Room 2003f, John F. Kennedy Building, Boston, Ma. 02203.

Consumer Information — The Federal government offers numerous booklets for consumers, many of them free, some of which are listed in the "Consumer Information Catalog." The catalog is itself available free of charge from the Boston address above. Booklets listed in the catalog cover such subjects as autos, housing, travel, employment and gardening. An additional booklet about gardening, "Growing Your Own Vegetables," is also being offered without charge by Senator Tsongas' Boston office.

Student Aid — Now is the high season of school and college applications and acceptances, and information about financial aid for students is of particular interest. One good primer on the subject, "The Student Guide -- Five Federal Financial Aid Programs 1983-84," is available for free from the Boston address above. For these publications there is a limit of one per constituent as long as supplies last.

United States Senate

OFFICE OF SENATOR TSONGAS
392 RUSSELL BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

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