

project of going to look at the health conditions of schools and several schools that I visited one-fifth of the children had serious asthma conditions. Many of the teachers were beginning to have respiratory illnesses.

We are going to test people in those kinds of hardship situations. They do not have technology. They do not have enough books and supplies. What I call opportunities to learn are ignored and we are going to test them, but I will support theoretically the need for national testing but that controversy is going to rage for awhile. I do not think it is going to really be settled for a long time.

What I want to do is support something that I think we have agreement on. I think Republicans and Democrats both agree that in order for children to learn they need a physical facility that is safe, a physical facility that is healthy and a physical facility that is conducive to learning.

We need lights. In some of the school rooms we have, the lights are shot out and the kids are in a dark situation in parts of the classrooms. The library, they are crowded one on top of another. On and on it goes. They need a situation that is conducive to learning.

There is basic agreement that those are terrible conditions. There is basic agreement that in America all across the country, not just New York City, not just the big cities but in many rural areas, it is atrocious the conditions of the schools. We need some help.

The General Accounting Office, as I said before, estimated in 1995, that between \$110 billion and \$112 billion is needed in order to revamp the schools, in order to just get them in working conditions, not to take care of new enrollment.

Now we are in 1999, going into the year 2000, with large increases in enrollment. They project enrollment in the year 2008 will be up at 54 million children from the 53 million; there will be 54 million. So they are not going down. Whatever the demographics are, I know people are getting older, the senior citizen population is getting larger, but the children, the children who go to school, that population certainly is getting larger.

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We have all of this happening and the response is to deal with rhetoric instead of substance.

Now, back to the President's proposal for \$25 billion in bonding authority that the Federal Government will pay the interest on. What is wrong with that proposal? Nothing, except that it does not go nearly far enough. I endorse that proposal. It is the only one on the table. Congratulations, Mr. President. He has been at it for years trying to get some movement.

Part of the reason the President fashioned this particular approach is it does not require direct appropriations, because he wanted something that he

thinks will pass. So we have a bill in the Committee on Ways and Means, the committee that is least concerned about children. They have never been that involved in education, they have the authority and they have the jurisdiction. They must deal with this construction bill.

Suppose it passed. And as I said before, suppose we passed it. New York City and New York State would not be able to make immediate use of it. They would have to have a referendum. We would have to have the State's citizens, all the citizens of the State would have to vote. The State would have to vote to allow the bonding to go forward. We cannot have bonding, we cannot make the loan that we are going to pay the interest on unless all the voters approved.

The last time we had such an issue before the voters, they did not approve it. It was voted down by the upstate voters who lived in relative luxury, schoolwise. They thought it was only for the poor children of New York City and they voted it down.

We may succeed after two or three tries, but how long will that take and how many generations will be forced to eat lunch at 10 a.m. in the morning? How many generations will be forced to deal with asbestos and lead paint, the fumes from coal-burning furnaces going into their lungs? How long do we wait while we fight these bond issues in New York State? And many other States and localities also require that the voters approve the bond before we can take advantage of that offer.

So even if we succeed and the Committee on Ways and Means should change its ways and really get serious about doing something for the children of America, even if we succeed, there is no immediate relief for the people who need it most.

But I am all for it. Let us give it a try. However, I would propose, and I hope that my colleagues will join me in proposing, that we directly fund school construction. We appropriate the money for school construction. We need, in order to have a rational respectable beginning, we need \$100 billion over a 5-year period. \$100 billion over a 5-year period is what is needed.

Mr. Speaker, I would say to the President, to the Republican majority, the Democratic minority, let us have a bipartisan approach to school construction. We all agree that whether we are for testing or not, or for after-school centers, or the whole word method or the phonics method, there are a lot of debates going on in education about various issues and methods and approaches. But here we are talking about physical facilities. If we agree that physical facilities are important, then let us unite and appropriate what is needed.

Mr. Speaker, \$100 billion over a 5-year period is a good beginning. Where are we going to get the \$100 billion from? From the surplus, Mr. President, from the surplus, majority Repub-

licans. Let us dedicate \$20 billion, or one-fifth of the surplus, for each year over the next 5 years, dedicate that to school construction. \$20 billion or one-fifth of the surplus, whichever is larger, to school construction.

Does that sound unreasonable? Are Democrats going to be labeled as "big spenders" by Republicans because they propose \$100 billion for school construction over a 5-year period? I do not think they should be, because last year we appropriated \$218 billion for highways over a 6-year period. And the overwhelming majority, more than 90 percent of the Congress, Democrats and Republicans, voted for the highway bill, for \$218 billion.

So let us not continue the fraud and say we are interested in education, when the basic problem, the problem of construction, which if we do not deal with the problem of school construction, if we do not have more classroom space, the money appropriated recently of \$1.2 billion that we all agreed to lower the size in classrooms, we cannot use it in New York City effectively because we do not have the classroom space. There are many other cities that cannot use it.

At the bottom, if we do not do anything about construction in an appropriate way, everything else is a fraud. All of the other concerns about education moves in the direction of being fraudulent. Deal with construction first. Deal with the issue that we could get agreement on. The money can come out of the surplus.

After all, we are proposing \$110 billion for defense expenditures for weapons systems that are not needed. Why do we not sell bonds to deal with those weapons systems that are not needed and give the money directly and appropriate the money directly to go to localities for school construction?

The challenge is to be real and do not join those people who want to destroy the poorest children in America. They just do not care. The country as a whole will suffer. Social Security will suffer because the workforce is not there to produce the income for Social Security. Our national security militarywise will suffer because we cannot staff our aircraft carriers. Recently we had an aircraft carrier that did not have enough staff because the people are not there in order to operate the ship.

The rest of the country needs an education system. Education is our first line of defense and first line of security and prosperity and we should act accordingly by dealing with school construction first.

GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE:
"BETTER THAN EVER"

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYES). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland, Mr. HOYER, is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to bring to the attention of the House the following article about the Government Printing Office from the December 1998 issue of *In-Plant Graphics* which describes the GPO as "Better Than Ever." As a case in point, the article describes GPO's first-rate production and dissemination of the six-volume, 8,327-page Starr Report from last September, a mammoth production job for which the distinguished chairman of the House Judiciary Committee (Mr. HYDE) has thoughtfully commended the agency.

The article correctly notes that GPO receives little national attention. The fact is, we in Congress could not perform our legislative duties without the timely, professional, non-partisan support of the GPO. Nor could millions of our constituents enjoy an easy, no-cost path to over 140,000 government publications without GPO Access [<http://www.access.gpo.gov>], an electronic gateway to more than 70 federal databases.

Mr. Speaker, as we conduct the people's business, let's remember that we could not do so without the support of many others, including the dedicated professionals of the Government Printing Office. The article follows:

BETTER THAN EVER
(By Bob Neubauer)

GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

Annual sales	\$195.9 million
Operating budget	\$187.4 million
Full-time production employees	1,264
Total GPO full-time employees	3,375
Jobs printed per year	163,200
Annual impressions	4.7 billion

Even though it's the largest in-plant in the country and produces scores of important government documents, the Government Printing Office (GPO) doesn't usually get a lot of national attention.

That all changed in September when the Starr Report was unleashed on the world. GPO was given the arduous task of disseminating that report to an eager public. The initial report arrived on disk, but supplemental materials consisted of boxes of documents, which had to be shot as camera-ready copy. The resulting products were put on the Internet, on CD-ROMs and on paper—all under the watchful eyes of armed police officers.

"We took the extra step—just to assure Congress that we were treating this with the utmost security—of posting police officers throughout the plant at key production points," explains Andrew M. Sherman, director of the Office of Congressional, Legislative and Public Affairs. Had there been no guards, though, Sherman is confident that GPO employees would have maintained their usual extreme sensitivity to security issues.

"We have never had a record of leaks," Sherman maintains. The guards, though, seemed to have their hands full just keeping the mob of reporters at bay, he adds despite the distractions, GPO employees kept their minds on their work, Sherman says—though he admits, "there was a great deal of anxiety on everybody's part."

This situation was far from normal at GPO's Washington headquarters, where the daily production of the Federal Register and the Congressional Record are usually the top jobs. Taking up three buildings and almost 35 acres of floor space, GPO is larger than most commercial printers. Under the direction of Public Printer Michael DiMario, a presidential appointee, GPO generates \$800 million a year, \$100 million of which involves document dissemination.

Created in 1860, GPO handles congressional and executive branch printing and is in charge of distributing federal documents to the public. As large as GPO's printing operation is, though, it procures about 75 percent of its work from the private sector, and produces only the complex, time- and security-critical work.

Though certain forces in the government still grumble that GPO should be shut down, some jobs just can't be printed by the private sector, Sherman insists. A prime example is the Record. Its average size exceeds 200 pages—about the size of four to six metropolitan daily papers—but its page count has fluctuated from a low of 10 to a record of 1,912 pages. Material arrives in many different forms, including handwritten notes, and Congress sometimes stays in session until late at night. Despite all that GPO is still mandated to get 9,000 copies of the Record printed and delivered to Congress by 9 a.m. every day.

Another example is the recent Omnibus Appropriations Spending Bill. A 16-inch tall stack of documents arrived at GPO and it had to be keyed in, proofread very carefully and output in the Congressional Record in just two days. The final congressional report, completed later, was 1,600 pages long.

In producing independent counsel Starr's report, GPO showed the same trademark speed and efficiency, despite the distractions provided by the guards and the reporters. The Report was up on GPO's Web site (www.access.gpo.gov) within a half-hour of receiving a CD-ROM containing HTML files from the House of Representatives. By the evening of that same day, GPO had produced 500 loose-leaf copies for House members using DocuTechs at GPO, in the Senate and in the House. By the next morning, 13,000 additional copies had been printed on GPO's smaller 32-page 2538" Hantscho webs and bound for distribution.

"Everybody was just at their top performance here in getting it done," Sherman praises.

The overwhelming response to the GPO's Web site publication of the Starr Report was a landmark event in that it was one of the first times that such a newsworthy document was available on the Internet before it was printed. Even so, this was really just another example of how GPO has been changing to accommodate the latest technologies.

"There's a great public expectation for quick electronic access to government information and for it to be free, and we have accommodated that with our Web site," Sherman remarks. He says 15 million documents are downloaded from GPO's site each month. The band-width of the site is currently being expanded, he says.

Fiber-optics and lasers are playing increasingly large roles for GPO. Up to half of the Senate portion of the Record is transmitted to GPO from Capitol Hill via fiber-optic connections, and 80 percent of the Register is transmitted by laser beam from the Office of the Federal Register.

GPO recently took another bold step forward in technology when it purchased two new Krause America LX170 computer-plate systems. They will make plates for GPO's three 64-page, two-color, 3550" Hantscho web presses, which are used to print the Record, the Register, the U.S. Budget and other documents.

Though the Starr Report may have made life difficult at GPO, it also brought GPO a lot of praise and recognition. Papers like the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Hartford Courant* and the *Baltimore Sun* published articles lauding GPO. House Judiciary Committee Chairman Henry Hyde even sent a letter of praise.

"People were very impressed with our ability to get this done," says Sherman.

JERRY SOLOMON FLAG
PROTECTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I am joined tonight by the gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY) that replaced Jerry Solomon, and the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), a colleague of mine from San Diego.

Before I go into what we are going to talk about, which is a flag amendment that was first brought up before this Congress by Jerry Solomon from New York, I would make a statement to the gentleman from New York (Mr. OWENS) that Republicans will join him gladly in school construction. Last year, in the 105th, we offered a bill for school construction that gave a 30 percent tax incentive for school construction for private companies to build them. The President vetoed that, and he came back with a school construction bill.

We would even support that if the gentleman will waive Davis-Bacon, which is the union wage which costs 35 percent more to build those schools. What we propose is to have an amendment to waive Davis-Bacon, let the schools keep the money instead of going to the unions, let the schools keep it and develop teacher training or equipment for the schools and whatever.

So, I would say to the gentleman there is room for maneuver. We want school construction, but we want the majority of the money going to the schools, not to a special interest group.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, would the gentleman from California agree to join me in a special order in the future to talk about this, the two of us?

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. I will, my friend.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, the gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY) took Jerry Solomon's place in New York and he swore that he would carry on the fight of the great Jerry Solomon, who just retired. And there was no one, not the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), not myself or the gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY), who can speak with the passion that Jerry Solomon did on this particular bill. As a matter of fact, I am going to title it the Jerry Solomon Flag Protection Act when we submit this thing.

We have 230 cosponsors, Mr. Speaker, and I think that is a great tribute to this body, both bipartisan. The great gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURTHA) is cosponsor on the other side of the aisle and well respected by both parties and will go forward with the message as well on his side. But with 230 cosponsors in the last Congress, we had 312 votes, well over the requirement of two-thirds to pass this.

What I would like to do, Mr. Speaker, is speak of just a few ideas for 5 minutes, maybe 10, and then I will turn over the mike to my colleagues and let