

were not many fat-cat special interests supported in there. Frankly, I expected the appropriations bills for fiscal year 1997 to be not quite as radically conservative as those they forced through Congress for fiscal year 1996 which caused the Federal Government to shutdown. However, they have in this session already passed several bills that cut spending in domestic areas that are important to hard-working Americans, that are vitally significant to the social, economic and personal well-being of this country: education, health services and research, housing, and transportation, just to name a few.

So, here we go again. This fiscal year 1997 appropriations bill for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, State, and related agencies is for \$29.5 billion. While this is a substantial amount of money, one must remember that it takes a lot of money to fund a Federal Government as responsive and responsible as ours ought to be. Yet, this bill is for \$2.1 billion less than the President has, after careful consideration, determined that he needs in order to be able to carry out plans and programs necessary to fight crime, create jobs and train the necessary workforce, to prevent and address family and societal violence, drugs and illegal immigration. Those are critical imperatives, but they are not the only priorities that need funding and are not all the priorities of my constituents in the Seventh District of Illinois. Among my constituents are the richest and the poorest of America, and they report to me that they need people programs that benefit women, minorities, and persons with very limited incomes, as well as the several very important agencies that severely effect them all, but that are targeted for funding cuts.

For example, the Legal Services Corporation [LSC] is an agency that provides free and reduced-fee legal services to low-income individuals. By proposing dramatic cuts in funding for the LSC, the Republicans risk the following results: (1) a 2 million reduction in the number of clients served; (2) a 50 percent decrease in the number of neighborhood offices (from, 1100 in fiscal year 1995 to 550); (3) a cut by more than half, in the number of LSC lawyers available to provide legal services; and (4) a startling cut-off of legal assistance to clients in thousands of communities across the Nation. This Republican fiscal 1997 appropriations of \$141 million for LSC is a devastating cut from the fiscal year 1995 funding level of \$415 million, and is unquestionably meant to destroy the Legal Services Corporation. Wake up Americans. Open your eyes and see what the Dole-Gingrich Republicans who control this body have just done. They have defeated an amendment to restore reasonable funding to the LSC that would have prevented the virtual abandonment of the longstanding Federal commitment to the legal protection of working poor Americans, including victims of spousal and child abuse, dead-beat parents who run out on the child support obligations, and victims of consumer fraud.

Another program gutted by the Republicans and left to bleed a slow death, is the Minority Business Development Administration [MBDA] within the Department of Commerce. The mission of the MBDA is to work to develop and support the successes and increase competitive opportunities for minority-owned businesses—to ensure that minority Americans can participate in the economy not just as workers, but also as entrepreneurs and global

leaders. The MBDA supports citizens who may be first generation business owners in their efforts to succeed. Created in 1969 by President Nixon, the MBDA provides technical assistance to minority entrepreneurs that greatly increase their ability to compete in domestic and international markets. While minorities make up 25 percent of the U.S. population, they represent only 9 percent of the Nation's business owners. MBDA has a proven record of leveraging scarce public resources by partnering with the private sector to increase capital and market opportunities in underutilized business communities, and yet the Republicans who control this body are so determined to render ineffectual a good program that was created by their own President Nixon, that they have also rejected an effort to restore reasonable funding for the MBDA.

There are many valuable programs that should be funded under this bill; however, the appropriations levels proposed by the Republicans will only weaken, injure and damage the successful efforts underway to bring about a reduction in waste, fraud, and abuse of the public trust. I urge my colleagues to defeat this bill so that we can get back to the negotiating table in the best interest of all Americans. If this bill should be passed by the Congress, I will urge the President to veto it and send it back to the drawing board.

THANK YOU DONALD E. BECKER

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 22, 1996*

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, many of us believe that public service is among the greatest calling that exists. On July 23, many fortunate people who live in Genesee Township will come together to celebrate the remarkable more than 25 years of service that Donald E. Becker has provided as the township's treasurer.

Donald Becker's devotion to his community is easy to understand. His grandfather, August George Becker was the township supervisor from 1922 to 1926, and his father, Walter Becker, was in the Genesee County Sheriff's Department. Donald Becker was the co-founder of the all volunteer Kearsley Genesee Rescue Squad, as well as its treasurer. He has also been tremendously involved in the Genesee County Treasurer/Clerk Association, the Genesee Parks Commission, the Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission, and the region 5 planning commission.

With all of this professional involvement, it is remarkable to note that Donald Becker is most noted for his personal style of dealing with people. For example, he hand-delivers checks for the school districts because he believes it's important for the checks to get there. He has been involved on so many committees because he believes that you have to get to know people in order to be effective as a community leader.

He has been careful with taxpayers dollars, leading efforts to allow for the investment of local funds in savings accounts, allowing interest earnings to both supplement local revenues, and to help reduce the need for any additional tax assessments.

With all of the wonderful public activities that this man has undertaken, it is also very good

to know what he considers his most important hobby to be spending time with his wife, Geraldine, his children and their spouses, his grandchildren, and his great grandson. A man can be no luckier that having a rewarding career, and recognizing the ultimate importance of his family.

Mr. Speaker, local officials are the hallmark of our democratic society. They help people understand the importance of good government. Genesee Township has been very fortunate to have Donald Becker, and, indeed, his family, for these many years. I urge you and all of our colleagues to join me in wishing him the very best as he celebrates his years of service to Genesee Township.

## WHY CATHOLIC SCHOOL MODEL IS TABOO

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 22, 1996*

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I think that anyone who is truly interested in education should read the following article from the July 17, 1996, issue of the Wall Street Journal. I would like to call it to the attention of my colleagues and other readers of the RECORD.

WHY THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL MODEL IS TABOO  
(By Sol Stern)

New York City's Cardinal John J. O'Connor has repeatedly made the city an extraordinary offer: Send me the lowest-performing 5% of children presently in the public schools, and I will put them in Catholic schools—where they will succeed. The city's response: silence.

In a more rational world, city officials would have jumped at the cardinal's invitation. It would have been a huge financial plus for the city. The annual per-pupil cost of Catholic elementary schools is \$2,500 per year, about a third of what taxpayers now spend for the city's public schools.

NO IDLE BOAST

More important, thousands more disadvantaged children would finish school and become productive citizens. For Cardinal O'Connor's claim that Catholic schools would do a better job than public schools is no idle boast. In 1990 the RAND Corporation compared the performance of children from New York City's public and Catholic high schools. Only 25% of the public-school students graduated at all, and only 16% took the Scholastic Aptitude Test, vs. 95% and 75% of Catholic-school students, respectively. Catholic-school students scored an average of 815 on the SAT. By shameful contrast, the small "elite" of public-school students who graduated and took the SAT averaged only 642 for those in neighborhood schools and 715 for those in magnet schools.

In 1993 the New York State Department of Education compared city schools with the highest levels of minority enrollment. Conclusion: "Catholic schools with 81% to 100% minority composition outscored New York City public schools with the same percentage of minority enrollment in Grade 3 reading (+17%), Grade 3 mathematics (+10%), Grade 5 writing (+6%), Grade 6 reading (+10%) and Grade 6 mathematics (+11%)."

Yet most of the elite, in New York and elsewhere, is resolutely uninterested in the Catholic schools' success. In part this reflects the enormous power of teachers' unions, fierce opponents of anything that

threatens their monopoly on education. In part it reflects a secular discomfort with religious institutions.

I myself have felt this discomfort over the years, walking past Catholic schools like St. Gregory the Great, near my Manhattan home. Every morning, as I took my sons to public school, I couldn't help noticing the well-behaved black and Hispanic children in their neat uniforms entering the drab parish building. But my curiosity never led me past the imposing crucifix looking down from the roof, which evoked childhood images of Catholic anti-Semitism and clerical obscurantism.

Finally, earlier this year, I ventured in, and I was impressed. I sat in, for example, as fourth-grade teacher Susan Viti conducted a review lesson on the geography of the Western United States. All the children were completely engaged and had obviously done their homework. They were able to answer each of her questions about the principal cities and capitals of the Western states—some of which I couldn't name—and the topography and natural resources of the region. "Which minerals would be found in the Rocky Mountains?" Miss Viti asked. Eager hands shot up. Miss Viti used the lesson to expand the students' vocabulary; when the children wrote things down, she insisted on proper grammar and spelling.

I found myself wishing that my own son's fourth-grade teachers at nearby Public School 87, reputedly one of the best public schools in the city, were anywhere near as productive and as focused on basic skills as Miss Viti. Both my boys' teachers have wasted an enormous amount of time with empty verbiage about the evils of racism and sexism. By contrast, in Miss Viti's class and in all the other Catholic-school classes I visited, it was taken for granted that a real education is the best antidote to prejudice.

Miss Viti earns \$21,000 a year, \$8,000 less than a first-year public-school teacher. "I've taught in an all-white, affluent suburban school, where I made over \$40,000," she says. "This time I wanted to do something good for society, and I am lucky enough to be able to afford to do it. I am trying to instill in my students that whatever their life situation is now, they can succeed if they work hard and study."

You might expect liberals, self-styled champions of disadvantaged children, to applaud the commitment and sacrifice of educators like Susan Viti. You might even expect them to look for ways of getting government money to these underfunded schools. Instead, they've done their best to make sure the wall of separation between church and state remains impenetrable. Liberal child-advocacy groups tout an endless array of "prevention" programs that are supposed to stave off delinquency, dropping out of school and teen pregnancy—yet they consistently ignore Catholic schools, which nearly always succeed in preventing these pathologies.

Read the chapter on education in Hillary Clinton's "It Takes a Village." Mrs. Clinton advocates an alphabet soup of education programs for poor kids, but says not a word about Catholic schools. Similarly, in his books on education and inner-city ghettos, Jonathan Kozol offers vivid tours of decrepit public schools in places like the South Bronx, but he never stops at the many Catholic schools that are succeeding a few blocks away.

Why are Catholic schools taboo among those who talk loudest about compassion for the downtrodden? It's hard to escape the conclusion that one of the most powerful reasons is liberals' alliance with the teachers' unions, which have poured hundreds of millions of dollars into the campaign coffers

of liberal candidates around the country. Two weeks ago I attended the National Education Association convention in Washington, a week-long pep rally for Bill Clinton punctuated by ritual denunciations of privatization.

Before the teachers' unions rise to political power, it was not unusual to see urban Democrats like former New York Gov. Mario Cuomo support government aid to Catholic schools. Mr. Cuomo's flip-flop on this issue is especially revealing. In 1974, when he first ran for public office, Mr. Cuomo wrote a letter to potential supporters: "I've spent more than 15 years . . . arguing for aid to private schools," he wrote. "If you believe aid is a good thing, then you are the good people. If you believe it, then it's your moral obligation, as it is my own, to do something about it. . . . Let's try tax-credit plans and anything else that offers any help."

Mr. Cuomo soon learned his lesson. In his published diaries he wrote: "Teachers are perhaps the most effective of all the state's unions. If they go all-out, it will mean telephones and vigorous statewide support. It will also mean some money." In his 1982 campaign for governor, Mr. Cuomo gave a speech trumpeting the primacy of public education and the rights of teachers. He won the union's enthusiastic endorsement against Ed Koch in the Democratic primary. Over the next 12 years, in private meetings with Catholic leaders, Gov. Cuomo would declare that he still supported tax relief for parochial school parents. Then he would take a completely different position in public. For example, in 1984 he acknowledged that giving tax credits for parochial-school tuition was "clearly constitutional" under a recent Supreme Court decision—but he refused to support such a plan.

Politically controlled schools are unlikely to improve much without strong pressure from outside. Thus, the case for government aid to Catholic schools is now more compelling than ever, if only to provide the competitive pressure to force state schools to change. And the conventional wisdom that government is constitutionally prohibited from aiding Catholic schools has been undermined by several recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions.

#### SUCKER'S TRAP

Since the powerful teachers' unions vehemently oppose any form of government aid to Catholic schools, reformers are often skittish about advocating vouchers or tuition tax credits, fearing that will end the public-school reform conversation before it begins. But to abandon aid to Catholic schools in the name of public-school reform is a sucker's trap. We have ended up with no aid to Catholic schools and no real public-school reform either.

Catholic schools are a valuable public resource not just because they profoundly benefit the children who enroll in them. They also challenge the public school monopoly, constantly reminding us that the neediest kids are educable and that spending extravagant sums of money isn't the answer. No one who cares about reviving our failing public schools can afford to ignore this inspiring laboratory of reform.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL P. FORBES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 22, 1996

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, on July 18, 1996, I was absent from the House of Rep-

resentatives due to the tragic explosion on TWA Flight 800 over the First Congressional District of New York. I felt it was appropriate to return to my district to support and comfort my constituents impacted by this disaster as well as to help coordinate local, State, and Federal search and rescue efforts.

Had I been present I would have voted "yes" on roll No. 327, "yes" on roll No. 328, "no" on roll No. 329, "no" on roll No. 330, and "yes" on roll No. 331.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3734, WELFARE AND MEDICAID REFORM ACT OF 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. LOUIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 17, 1996

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to H.R. 3734, the Balanced Budget Welfare Reform Act, a bill designed to overhaul our Nation's welfare system. Fifteen months ago, many of my colleagues and I stood before this body and showed our staunch disagreement with the House-passed welfare reform bill which made disastrous cuts in our Nation's welfare programs. I wish I could say that, since then, some compassion and reason had been interjected into this debate and produced a more favorable bill for consideration.

Unfortunately, H.R. 3734, the bill being deliberated today, targets the poorest in this country, in order to meet Republican budget priorities. When we examine the provisions of this legislation, it is abundantly clear that our colleagues have reneged on their commitment to ensure a "family friendly" Congress and to protect our Nation's children.

H.R. 3734 slashes more than \$61 billion over 6 years in welfare programs. This bill guts funding for the Food Stamp Program, cuts into the SSI protections for disabled children, drastically cuts child nutrition programs, and slashes benefits for legal immigrants. Mr. Speaker, I find these reductions in quality of life programs appalling.

How can my Republican colleagues praise this bill's work requirements when H.R. 3734 provides inadequate funding for education, training, and employment—essential components in contributing to longevity in the workforce? How can they stand by a bill that slashes more than \$3 billion in funding for meals to children in child care centers and homes? As if that were not devastating enough, this bill would cut nearly \$23 billion over 6 years from the Food Stamp Program and an additional \$23 billion in the SSI Program.

H.R. 3734 sends a signal to the Nation that our Government leaders place a very low priority on those individuals who have very little. In Cuyahoga County, we have a 20 percent poverty rate in a county of 1.4 million people. In the city of Cleveland, it is an alarming 42 percent. Throughout Cuyahoga County, more than 228,000 people receive food stamps. Many of these individuals constitute America's working poor. This punitive welfare measure will undoubtedly endanger their health and well-being.

Mr. Chairman, I can understand and support a balanced and rational approach to addressing the reform of our Nation's welfare system.