

things about it and I understand that you have double and triple sessions in your schools. Do you have anything to add to that?

Mr. SESSIONS. We do not have any double and triple sessions at the present time. We have eliminated all of them during the last year in the District school system, largely by a small program of transporting children from overcrowded areas to some other areas where there are more available classroom spaces.

We completely eliminated them for the present but our school system, as you know buildings are overcrowded and they are old.

It is entirely conceivable that we will have to again have some classes on a split session next year.

Mr. GIBBONS. How many years have you been on the school board?

Mr. SESSIONS. This is my first year.

Mr. GIBBONS. I was going to ask you the question whether you thought based upon your experience this was a good way to run the local school systems with a sort of absentee city council like we have here.

Mr. SESSIONS. It is a cumbersome system at best and Mrs. Green has a bill that would legislate me out of a job, I believe.

Mrs. GREEN. And he helped with this effort that you and I undertook last year, Congressman Gibbons.

Mr. GIBBONS. Do you mean he is a sympathetic supporter?

Mr. SESSIONS. One of our difficulties is that the school board conceives the need for a new school but then has to take this to the District government to agree to this need that it has conceived.

Then we go to Congress and get site and planning money. When we have that we come back with the final plans and get construction money. The result is that it tends to be 5 years after we have conceived the school before we begin breaking ground on it in terms of what has been happening in broadening education. Maybe a building is obsolete before we get started.

Mr. GIBBONS. I wonder if sometime we couldn't have, particularly as far as this bill is concerned, Madam Chairman, a long session with our school board here. I say "our" because I am on the city council and really go into this because I think it has an important effect on the way we handle all of our business in the District.

Mr. SESSIONS. We would be very happy to have that kind of session. A special problem relating to what we talked about this morning, the teacher shortage, is very severe in Washington because Congress at its best is likely to get the budget passed in September and October and you know what it is to go out and try to hire teachers in October.

They have all been hired. Perhaps there are ways we could work out something.

Mr. GIBBONS. I will yield to the chairman.

Mrs. GREEN. We already have started the arrangements for a day similar to the one we had in New York City to visit some of the schools and to talk about the teacher's professional needs.

How many years ago did you start the idea of replacing Shaw?

Mr. SESSIONS. Five years, I will agree is a hopeful estimate.

Mrs. GREEN. I have been here since 1955 and there was discussion then. I was under the impression then that was kind of an old idea in 1955.