

and if you were to make an award in September and require completion by March, that would mean something.

Mr. FOSTER. Yes. I should point out to the committee, Mr. Chairman, that most of our buildings take in excess of a year to build. We have a few that are in the 6- to 10-month variety, but most of them are a year, 15 months, 18 months.

Mr. O'HARA. So that there is at least one and perhaps two traditional construction seasons in most of your contracts?

Mr. FOSTER. That is right. Of course some of our very biggest jobs will run 3 or 4 years. What we would like to do, if a building is going to take 1 year to build, is to get it closed in, get the structural work done, the roof on, and the walls up by October or November. Then we can continue without any slackening of indoor work.

I ran across an interesting case that the committee might want to just note as a curiosity. We have a small post office to be built in the Sequoia National Park, and we hoped to get it awarded in the late spring, say along about April or May, so that the contractor could begin work in June, which is about as early as you can start in the park.

Unfortunately the bidding was restricted. We didn't get much competition. The bids came in higher than we expected, and it took us 6 or 8 weeks to augment those funds. We had to scratch around and get some extra money and so the contract wasn't awarded and notice to proceed issued until August. The contractor worked until about the first of December and, faced with 50 inches of snow on the ground, he had to stop and didn't resume work until June 3 of this year. The building will be completed, hopefully, next month.

This is only a \$90,000 building. It should have taken him about 6 months to build. Actually it is going to run us a year and a month or two.

Mr. O'HARA. Of course, you point out it is a curiosity.

Mr. FOSTER. That is just a curiosity.

Mr. O'HARA. That is a rather extreme case both in terms of climate and accessibility.

Mr. FOSTER. That is true.

Mr. O'HARA. You might be able to cope with 50 inches of snow in the city, but somewhere where you have a large-scale problem of transportation of materials along with that kind of weather condition, it would be about as bad as you can get.

You have done 75 to 100 market surveys, and you have yet to have your regional office involved in any of these reports to you that the work ought to be postponed because of unavailability of building tradesmen, right?

Mr. FOSTER. Only one case that I can recall.

Mr. O'HARA. Of course the availability of building tradesmen isn't the whole story. The typical pattern of employment in the construction industry in an area where construction is not depressed is that construction workers are working extremely long workweeks during the building season; 60 or 70 hours is not uncommon.

Mr. FOSTER. That is true.

Mr. O'HARA. So you run into overtime costs that perhaps you wouldn't have in the wintertime. But your surveys, stated in terms of availability, just show there are enough workers available to complete the job?