

Mr. O'HARA. That will be fine and without objection the full text of your statement will be entered at this point in the record and you may proceed in any way you wish.

(The prepared statement follows:)

STATEMENT BY THOMAS F. MURPHY, PRESIDENT, BRICKLAYERS, MASONS & PLASTERERS INTERNATIONAL UNION OF AMERICA

Mr. Chairman, I consider it a sincere privilege to have an opportunity to make this statement before the Select Subcommittee on Labor—House of Representatives.

The problem of seasonality in construction is extremely serious and of much concern to the members of my organization.

We are grateful that the Select Subcommittee on Labor is investigating this matter and hope that your hearings will stimulate the necessary action needed to bring about a solution to this problem.

The members of the Bricklayers Masons and Plasterers International Union—whom I represent probably suffer more from lost time due to seasonality—than any other building craft. Because of this we have been very active in bringing this matter to the attention of key segments of the building industry and government and have cooperated with all of those who are attempting to solve this problem. I personally have been interviewed by the Engineering News Record Magazine and have brought this matter to the attention of the Members of the American Architects through an article that I authored and which was published in the May 1967 issue of the A.I.A. Journal. My organization is very active in participation with other members of the masonry industry in our "Masonry Industry All-Weather Committee". Through this committee we are studying construction methods and the development of new technology in materials and equipment that will assist us in the elimination of seasonal lost time for our craftsmen. I have mentioned these few examples of our activity to illustrate to the members of this Select Subcommittee on Labor, that we are not sitting on our hands, and furthermore, we have been vigorously attacking this problem.

To present to you a clear idea on the implications of seasonality to the masonry industry and to our craftsmen—I will offer the following facts:

Two years ago we surveyed our local unions with health and welfare plans, such plans are an excellent source of information on man hours worked. The information that we received showed that bricklayers worked an average of 1400 hours a year, or 35 40 hour weeks. If we assume that the national "norm" of full employment is 2000 hours, or 50 40 hour weeks, then the skilled trained craftsmen of my union are employed for only 70 per cent of the "work year".

For 15 weeks of the year, bricklayers are unemployed and have no opportunity to use skills acquired at considerable cost to themselves and the nation. Much of this is true of other construction craftsmen. This is an enormous waste, and it creates personal hardships and anxieties. This industry's skilled workers accept a pattern of employment that most Americans would find intolerable.

Seasonal fluctuations in construction employment affect not just the workers: They are a burden on the national economy. The Department of Labor says that the traditional pattern is for unemployed contract construction workers to receive about one-fourth of all unemployment benefits paid in the months of January, February, and March. In the summer months, these workers account for only one-tenth or one-eleventh of the benefits paid.

Total state unemployment benefits of \$273 million were paid in March of 1965. Since construction workers draw higher than average benefits, they received at least \$70 million of the total. In September of that year, total benefits amounted to \$138 million—and construction workers received an estimated \$15 million. Much of the \$55 million differential between the amounts paid unemployed construction workers in the two seasons must be considered as waste due to "seasonality".

Another way of looking at the cost of "seasonality" is to consider the economic loss of manhours. When we fail to make efficient use of the skilled labor we do have, we mock statistical reports and forecasts of labor "shortages." If the 160,000 journeymen in the BM & PIU worked an average of 45 weeks in a year, rather than 35, the economy would gain an additional 64,000,000 skilled manhours. This would be the equivalent of having an additional 35,000 trained bricklayers producing over a 45-week work year. Multiply this effect many times in order to understand what this could mean to the entire industry, for nearly