

hours, little more than half of the 1,600-hour target that is normally used to evaluate full employment in the construction industry.

A good part of this low average arises, of course, from the large number of casual employees in our ranks. Our union has traditionally been a source of employment for the summer workers in the construction industry, who never intend to devote more than a few months of any year to working as a construction laborer.

When we eliminate that portion of our membership, we find a significant change in the average number of hours worked. The career construction laborer works an approximate 1,364 hours during the year.

While this is considerably better than the average for all laborers, it falls short of being a full year's work and is substantially short, still, of the 1,600-hour target.

The income generated by this low annual participation in the work force bears no relation to the efforts or skills expended by construction laborers in pursuit of their employment.

For 814 hours worked by all laborers surveyed, the average income is \$3,072.55 per year, very little more than the generally accepted poverty level. The permanent work force among our members earns about \$5,142.28 per year which is, at least, a living wage. We do not feel, however, that it represents adequate payment to our membership for their efforts.

The costs levied by seasonal work in the construction industry are staggering and we are convinced that they represent a significant portion of the high construction costs in the United States. Without attempting to estimate dollar values for these costs, we would like to summarize, briefly, some of the most important elements of high construction prices arising from seasonal work patterns.

The contractor must support his permanent establishment of equipment, office force, et cetera, on earnings generated in 6 to 8 months of feverish activity.

Leaving aside for the moment, questions of overtime pay which he must figure in his bids in order to work the normal construction season, this aspect of his operation places a high cost input on individual projects in terms of depreciation of idle equipment, maintenance of insurance and bonding costs.

The elimination of seasonality, while it might increase the cost of specific operations on the job would, we feel, reduce the contractors' input into projects since they would not be called upon to pay for large amounts of idle time.

Similarly, the buyer of construction work bears a high cost for seasonal shutdowns. To take one important aspect alone as an illustration, the buyer must pay carrying charges on his financing based on the amount of time required to finish the project.

Year-around work in the construction industry would not only eliminate such charges to the buyer, but would also permit him to begin drawing income from his investment much sooner than is presently the case.

It is our feeling that this factor, alone, if commonly known to construction buyers, would make an important contribution toward increasing the demands for year-around work.

A word should be said at this point about limitation of deseasonaliz-