

Mr. WHITLOCK. It certainly would be a tremendous help to all of us who are trying to solve this problem to have the Government agencies required to consider the seasonality problem and work with us to the solution.

Mr. O'HARA. Maybe we ought to pick up the Executive order, put it in bill form and try to put that through. That might have a good effect.

I was interested in the European experience that you comment on in your technical notes, 1-B, published in May of this year.

You point out, and in your summary it is made very clear, that, while there is much that remains to be learned about cold weather building construction, with the present level of knowledge and the will to do it, a great deal could be done.

Mr. WHITLOCK. Right.

Mr. O'HARA. In other words, it isn't so much a lack of available knowledge and techniques as it is a continued resort to the ways of the past and a sort of inertia, a reluctance.

Mr. WHITLOCK. That is true. I think that we can continue to improve on the methods we now have and we are certainly going to continue to research improvements in methods and in chemicals and so forth to improve the job, but we find basically the problem mentioned here of the egg and chicken. It is a highly competitive field, the construction industry, and when you are bidding on a job you try to cut all costs you can and, unless it is specified that there have to be techniques for all-weather construction, it is bypassed, it is forgotten regardless of cost because the bid is on the initial bid where if it were in the specifications and the contractor had to bid it in, it would probably be more effective.

Now, if the Executive order would require some specifications of that sort the Government could set the pace for private industry.

Mr. O'HARA. Well, now, the fellow from GSA who was here yesterday suggested a very simple solution, not a full solution, but a very simple step that would certainly enhance our knowledge and give us a little better focus on the problem. He said we could of course use alternatives.

In other words, when we are letting a contract for the construction of a building we could ask for a bid for 8 months' completion or for 2 years' completion.

Then you could ask whether you are going to curtail operations in the winter or if you are not going to curtail operations in the winter in addition to the advance completion date and then the Government of course has the option of accepting under either alternative.

My hunch is that if contractors were faced with having to really get out a sharp pencil and figure these things out in order to be the successful bidder, we would soon discover that the bids would be very little different under either option. I don't think the added cost would be too great.

Mr. WHITLOCK. I think that is true. There is also a factor in the savings in carrying charges which is indirectly related to contractors' costs.

Mr. O'HARA. They would start finding them.

Mr. WHITLOCK. The difficulty I find with Government contracts is that they try to get the most out of each appropriation. Therefore they try to get the lowest bid regardless of the ultimate costs and savings.