

Mr. O'HARA. I think your testimony and the work that you have done is very impressive. I assure you that we are going to be giving this matter very serious consideration and we are going to do the best we can to promote year-round activity in the construction industry.

Thank you very much.

Mr. WHITLOCK. We will be very glad to help in any way we can.

Mr. O'HARA. Without objection at this point in the record there will be entered a statement submitted by Gordon M. Freeman, who is international president of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, with respect to the subject that is under consideration by the committee.

(The prepared statement follows:)

STATEMENT OF GORDON M. FREEMAN, INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT, INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS, AFL-CIO

Mr. Chairman, my name is Gordon Freeman. I am President of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, which represents nine hundred thousand members of which two hundred thousand are engaged in construction work throughout the United States. The IBEW appreciates this opportunity to present its views in support of H.R. 15990 with certain modifications and suggestions which we feel will further carry out the intent of this Bill.

H.R. 15990 proposes a comprehensive study of all the aspects of seasonality on the construction industry and possible remedies to this situation. This subject has long been of concern to the IBEW. We have participated in previous studies of lesser scope, where possible, and observed the results of these studies with great interest. We have undertaken an employment survey of our own. We are awaiting the results of the BLS study now underway on the subject.

We are aware, as I am sure you are, of the ravaging effects of this phenomenon on the economy and the construction industry. The expanding and contracting of the labor force, the higher costs, the unnecessarily high unemployment rate of eight percent or higher in the winter months are only some of the effects. But the most devastating effects are on the individual who is idled or forced to seek employment elsewhere during the slack period through no fault of his own.

In order to assure a realistic development of the program and a fuller understanding of the problems involved, we would suggest the following language in place of line six on page one of the Bill:

"SECTION 108. The Secretary of Labor is directed to appoint an advisory committee from the construction industry representing labor and management and with their concurrence and the assistance of the Bureau of Labor Statistics investigate * * *."

Our reference to the Bureau of Labor Statistics is made in light of the present study on seasonality they are now conducting and because of their long experience in studies of this nature.

In conducting this study, one area which we feel must be covered is the timing of all government contracts. Public construction expenditures amounted to twenty-five billion dollars in 1967. This is more than one third of total new construction put in place for the year. More knowledge is definitely needed on this subject.

We feel that by controlling the timing of the construction start of these contracts in conjunction with the labor market situation of the area, a step would be made toward alleviating this seasonality problem. Should it be found our contention is correct, we would hope the Secretary of Labor would have the authority to regulate Federal contract starts. Surely the Federal Government would take the lead in overcoming this situation if it expects others to cooperate in a final solution.

In concluding, the IBEW sincerely requests the Committee's favorable action on this proposed legislation and the suggestions we have made, and we hope this will be the first step in eliminating a problem which plagues us all.

Mr. O'HARA. The subcommittee will now adjourn and will meet tomorrow morning at 10 a.m. in this room to continue our consideration of H.R. 15990.

(Whereupon, at 12:25 p.m., the subcommittee recessed, to reconvene at 10 a.m., Wednesday, July 17, 1968.)