

6. INTANGIBLE BENEFITS

Reduction of risk to life and property.—The proposed improvements to the channel will help reduce a serious hazard to life and property. In 1965 the State ferries made 246 transits through Sergius and Whitestone Narrows carrying a total of 12,500 passengers and 2,300 vehicles. Future plans are being made to triple the number of transits. Any improvement that will reduce the present hazards will contribute to the welfare of the general public.

Mr. HARSHA. And the damage prevention, is that to be the same vessels that use this harbor?

Colonel PICK. This is a passage, sir.

Mr. HARSHA. Passage, I mean.

Colonel PICK. And the damage eliminated is that which is caused by ships hitting rocks and reefs, which are prevalent in this area.

Mr. HARSHA. Is there some indication or some information you can provide for the record as to what the damages are now as the condition exists?

Colonel PICK. Yes, sir. The annual damage benefit prevented is \$71,000 a year.

Mr. HARSHA. I know that is what you claim are the benefits. Do you have some information to provide the committee to show how much damage is incurred under present conditions?

Colonel PICK. Yes, sir. We will be glad to provide it.

Mr. McEWEN. Mr. Chairman.

Mr. McCARTHY. Mr. McEwen.

Mr. McEWEN. I have been looking at the chart over here and trying to analyze this. These are two different projects?

Colonel PICK. Yes, sir.

Mr. McEWEN. The one on the left, Neva Strait, that is strictly a channel improvement, is that right, a widening of the channel?

Colonel PICK. That is correct.

Mr. McEWEN. There would be no, as far as operating costs, there would be no shorter route as a result of this, merely improved channel?

Colonel PICK. Yes, sir. This area is very hazardous with treacherous currents. At times ships have to wait to go through this area until such time as water and current conditions are suitable for traffic.

Mr. CLAUSEN. If the gentleman would yield, in addition to what he said, of course, there are a lot of rock reefs in the area that contribute to the other problems.

Mr. HARSHA. Is that the only access to that area, I mean to the point—

Colonel PICK. Yes, sir. This is the major route between Sitka and Juneau, sir.

Mr. McEWEN. This chart that says Neva Strait, that refers to Whitestone Narrows project?

Colonel PICK. Yes, sir.

Mr. McEWEN. The slash black lines across the channel, that indicates the existing channel, is that correct?

Colonel PICK. Yes, sir. The green shows where we are going to enlarge it.

Mr. McEWEN. The green is where you are proposing to widen and deepen?

Colonel PICK. Yes, sir. We are just widening and deepening it, sir.

General NOBLE. You are going to deepen it within the reefs.