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Congress Increases Amtrak Funding, Strengthens Law

PRESIDENT NIXON SIGNS BILL

As the NARP News goes to press, President Nixon has signed the Amtrak bill. It is rumored, however, that the White House Office of Management and Budget may impound \$55 million of the \$225 million authorized for Amtrak by the Congress, thereby limiting Amtrak to \$170 million.

Five NARP Proposals Incorporated Into Bill

A House-Senate conference committee has agreed to expand federal financial aid to Amtrak by \$225 million in grants and \$100 million more in guaranteed loans.

NARP Chairman Anthony Haswell said "every penny" is desperately needed for new cars, improved reservations systems, and new terminals.

The compromise bill also provides \$2 million a year to fund Amtrak service on international routes to Montreal, Vancouver and Nuevo Laredo.

Originally the House approved \$170 million in direct grants while the Senate voted for \$270 million. The conferees, headed by Sen. Warren G. Magnuson (D-Wash.) and Rep. Harley O. Staggers (D-W.Va.) settled on \$225 million.

The 10-member conference committee accepted five NARP recommendations which:

- Subject Amtrak to the Freedom of Information Act.
Clarify Amtrak authority to use any rail lines necessary to provide for a unified national system of passenger service.
Require Amtrak to exploit the potential for carrying mail and express.

(cont'd. on p. 4)



Fast Breaking Developments:

Table listing various news items and their corresponding page numbers, such as HUMPHREY, McGOVERN HAVE RAIL PLANS! on page 2.

AUTO-TRAIN BUYS 33 CARS; NEW ROUTE POSSIBLE

The Washington-based Auto-Train Corp. has purchased 33 bi-level, half-dome passenger cars from the Union Pacific Railroad to help handle a continued strong demand for Florida travel, company president Eugene Kerik Garfield has announced.

Previously, Mr. Garfield announced that Auto-Train had received consent to operate two additional trains on the Florida-Virginia route.

There is considerable speculation that Auto-Train is negotiating with Southern Railway to operate between Cincinnati and Florida. It would be the company's second route.

The dome cars will be renovated to Auto-Train specifications for use as coach-lounge, night club and buffet-movie cars.

Garfield added that the additional equipment will be used to handle business Auto-Train now is forced to turn away for lack of room.

The company is taking reservations a year in advance with the 1973 Easter season already heavily booked.

AMTRAK'S "NEW" TRAIN A SHAM NARP TELLS SENATOR WEICKER

Amtrak has been sharply criticized by NARP Chairman Anthony Haswell for billing the dilapidated Broadway Limited as its "first fully refurbished passenger train."

Haswell rode the Broadway recently from Chicago to Washington and noted that the train is in terrible operating condition.

In a letter to Senator Lowell P. Weicker (R-Conn.), Haswell said "My observations of the allegedly 'refurbished' equipment were harsh confirmation of your view" that Amtrak President Roger Lewis is an "interior decorator" who has merely dressed up decadent equipment with paint and upholstery.

The NARP Chairman recounted defects that he observed in the refurbished cars:

"The carpet in coach 4416 was filthy. One vestibule door on coach 4411 was defective and would not close properly. The same was true of one door on the lounge car. A steam leak between the lounge car and the diner made it almost impossible to see in the vestibule area between those two cars. The door into this vestibule on diner 4611 was very difficult to open, once properly closed. Bedroom sleeper 2235 rode excessively noisy, almost like a baggage or freight car.

"I suspect that very little work was done on the trucks and running gear of any of these cars.

(cont'd. on p. 4)

# DEMOCRATIC FRONT-RUNNERS HAVE RESCUE PLANS

## 1: Senator Hubert H. Humphrey

Full nationalization of railroads in the United States is certainly not inevitable. However, much more effective government action must be considered as a last resort to prevent crucial railroad lines from folding. The most obvious example of the possible need for government action is the case of the Penn Central.

The Congress is now looking into several bills which address the problem of railroad reform. I certainly favor Federal legislation which creates and preserves jobs, encourages investment, improves competition, and stimulates maintenance and growth in the railroad industry.

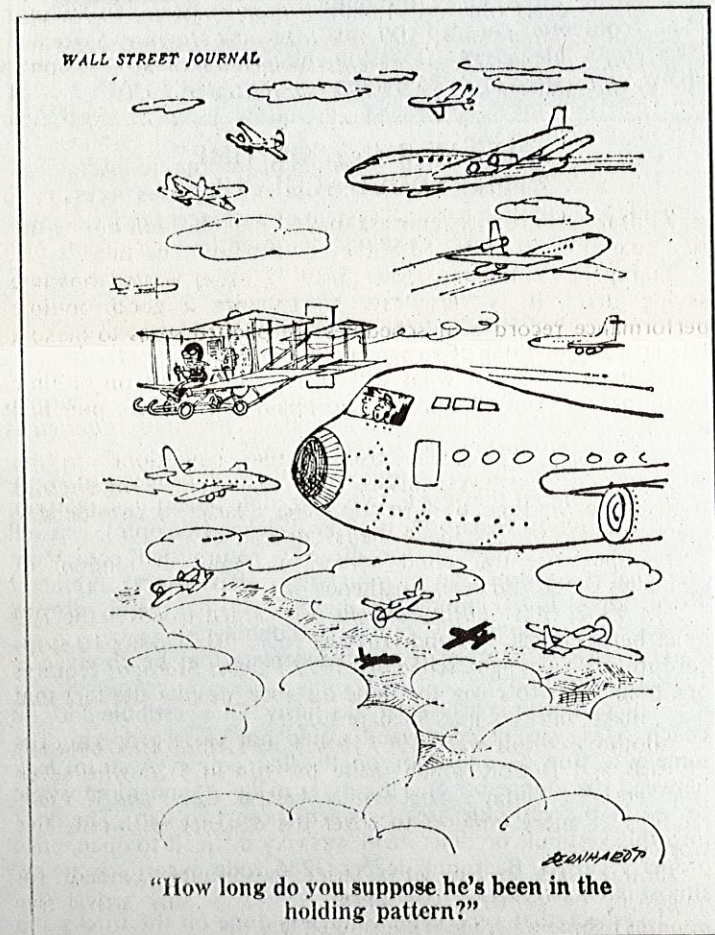
Another proposal which might improve the situation is for the Federal government to take over direct control of the roadbeds utilized by the railroad industry, thus treating railroads as it treats other forms of commercial transportation.

If the government does control and maintain the railroad beds, utilizing manpower provided from the ranks of maintenance personnel currently employed by the railroad industry, users' taxes could be employed to offset the costs.

The benefits to the industry might prove great indeed, and crisis situations like the case of Penn Central might not only be remedied, but prevented in the future.

## NARP's OPINION OF AUTO-TRAIN

"We are delighted with Auto-Train. As far as we can tell right now they've done everything the right way. I think it is the most exciting development in the rail passenger industry since air conditioning was introduced in the 1930s." — NARP Executive Director Joseph Vranich quoted in the New York Journal of Commerce.



## 2: Senator George McGovern

It seems to me that if we are going to save the railroads, the Federal Government can — as it does for highway and air traffic — provide a good deal of help. I would recommend that we consider the following steps:

An assumption by the Federal Government of the responsibility for the maintenance of roadbeds, bridges and other structures associated with the railroads. This should include the signal systems. The goal should be not only to upgrade existing track conditions, but also to fully standardize, on a national basis, all operational procedures with a view toward efficient movement of goods.

A program of research and development to improve all rolling stock, including engines. Pilot models should be built and tested before being made available for purchase by the railroads through their regular suppliers.

I believe that such a program could be financed, at least in part, by the 'trust fund concept' that has served us so well in the building of highways. It would relieve the railroads of much of the financial burden for their operation and free their key personnel for more productive pursuits. It would insure more and better service for every shipper and passenger.

## AMTRAK CHIEF FLIES, GETS IN LATE FOR RAIL DEDICATION

President Roger Lewis of Amtrak flew to Chicago, according to Labor newspaper (6/3/72 issue) to join in dedication of a new train concourse at Union Station. He didn't make it on time because his plane was late.

## "GO TAKE A BUS!" AMTRAK AGENT YELLS

"The worst place in New York City to purchase a ticket is at an Amtrak window," said NARP Executive Director Joseph Vranich after witnessing two shouting incidents between *Metroliner* passengers and ticket agents in Penn Station.

In a letter to Amtrak, the NARP director outlined the grievances of frustrated passengers who were waiting in long lines for tickets.

"The agents appeared to be moving at a snail's pace, causing passengers waiting for the next *Metroliner* to become particularly edgy," said Vranich.

"Noting that his train was due to depart in 10 minutes, one passenger asked if any more windows were going to be opened and someone behind the counter said 'no.'"

When passengers began demanding more open windows, an Amtrak agent yelled "Go take a bus!" NARP turned the name of the agent over to Amtrak headquarters.

The next day Vranich witnessed another shouting match as he was passing through the station to catch a train.

It is not surprising that passengers would become angry. At one point, only three Amtrak agents were available for 27 people waiting to purchase *Metroliner* tickets.

By contrast, a spot check of 25 airline ticket offices on New York's busy Fifth Avenue indicate that airlines have a greater number of personnel available to serve the public than does Amtrak.

United Airlines, for example, had six agents on duty and only 1 passenger standing at the counter.

The busiest airline was Pan American with eight agents on duty and 14 passengers waiting. However, an usher was available to insure that everyone was fairly treated.

Seven clerks and two ushers were on duty at Air France to serve the eight waiting passengers.

In no instance did any lines at airline counters even remotely resemble crowded Amtrak lines.

Vranich asked Amtrak President Roger Lewis: "This is Amtrak's 'showcase' *Metroliner* service?"

## AN EMBASSY ASKS: "WHERE IS AMTRAK DATA?"

"At this Embassy, NARP membership includes the Ambassador, the Director of the Cultural Center, and the Political Officer (myself). We are wondering if and when we will ever hear from Amtrak. Among [our] purposes is the development of tourism to the United States. . . It would seem that there is a market here which merits Amtrak's attention. The Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange program alone amounts to about \$50 million a year, some of which Amtrak should be trying to get. . . But very few embassy administrative officers know how to write a GTR (government travel request) to Amtrak, and Amtrak has not advised them how this should be done. . . At minimum, it seems to me, Amtrak should be preparing occasional, but regular and comprehensive, mailings to American embassies. . ." — Louis E. Kahn, Embassy of the United States of America, Dakar, Senegal.

### THIS IS NOT AN AIRPORT



Reprinted courtesy of Transport Central.

Above is a view of a huge TWA advertising display which occupied a portion of the main terminal area in Amtrak's Chicago Union Station. It encourages people to ride TWA to New York, Washington, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Denver and Kansas City — cities served also by Amtrak. Reports from Chicago-area NARP members indicate that TWA also had a brass band playing in front of the display for about two weeks.

Meanwhile, Amtrak has no equivalent display at any airport — not even in the crowded Northeast Corridor. Furthermore, Amtrak discontinued its radio commercials which compared the Metroliner to the air shuttle because of "pressure" from the airline industry.

Evidently Chicago Union Terminal Co. doesn't mind helping the competition to advertise — even though Amtrak is a major tenant. The terminal owners — Penn Central, Burlington Northern and Milwaukee Road — also don't seem to mind, even though the presidents of those three railroads are Amtrak board members.

At least other airlines aren't discriminated against at the Chicago station. On the very platform where the Super Chief loads passengers for Los Angeles appears an attractive poster urging Amtrak patrons to "Take the Los Angeles Expressway — CONTINENTAL AIRLINES."

### METROLINERS IN OHIO?

The possibility of a high-speed Metroliner running between Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton and Cincinnati is being explored by a group of Cleveland businessmen.

Frank Wagner, Cleveland attorney, envisions a two to three hour trip at speeds of 120 to 130 miles an hour. He admits "it's an embryonic thing" but says it's feasible.

"We feel we could run the short-hop aviation out of business," he emphasizes.

Wagner says the group has studied the Metroliner between New York and Washington as well as high-speed trains in Canada, Japan and Germany. "We feel we could do better," he says.

There are some monumental problems to be faced, however, before such a project could ever get started. Availability of funds for electrification and improved track is one of them. Interest from Amtrak is another.

## AMTRAK EQUIPMENT PROGRAM FALLING APART?

Amtrak has been forced to curtail plans to place totally refurbished trains on six long-distance routes this summer because of equipment breakdowns and poor shop production, according to a dispatch by United Press International reporter Donald Phillips.

Of the 1,290 cars that Amtrak purchased from the railroads, an average of 48% consistently has been out of service awaiting repairs, an Amtrak source told Phillips.

About half that number represents what railroad men call "bad order" cars — ones taken out of service because of a breakdown too serious to repair on the spot.

"The remaining half is divided between cars going through the shops, cars awaiting normal overhaul and cars with defects too serious to repair," said the dispatch.

Amtrak had announced on its first anniversary in May that it would place totally refurbished equipment on six trains — the *Broadway Limited*, *Merchants Limited*, *Silver Meteor*, *Super Chief*, *City of San Francisco* and the *Coast Daylight-Starlight*.

"It appears now that the summer will be over before all the new trains are in service," said the UPI reporter.

"The equipment problem is continuing to be a real problem for us," said an Amtrak official. "We just don't have enough refurbished equipment to do everything we wanted to do."

Amtrak officials pointed out to Phillips that the railroads allowed much of their passenger equipment to go with only minimum maintenance between the time it became clear Amtrak would take over passenger service and the time Amtrak decided which of the available cars it would buy.

Complicating Amtrak's problem is an unexpected increase in traffic. On some routes traffic is running as much as 8% above projections.

### ASTOUNDING!

*The Federal Highway Administration estimates the total cost of building the 42,500-mile Interstate Highway System at \$76.3 billion. This represents an increase of \$6.4 billion over the estimate of \$69.9 billion submitted in 1970.*

## AMTRAK RUNS "ON-TIME" WITH PADDED SCHEDULES

Amtrak has proudly reported that 81% of its trains during the first quarter of 1972 arrived at their destinations "on time."

Transport Central magazine (5/29/72 issue) wasted no time saying that "it is very easy to trumpet a good on-time performance record — if schedules are padded so as to make a late arrival something of an accomplishment."

Issuing the first of what will be regular reports on on-time performance, Amtrak said its short-haul routes were punctual 84.9%.

And despite "unusually bad weather conditions" in the Midwest and Northwest during Jan. and Feb., long-distance trains were on time 61% in the latest quarter, a considerable improvement over the 53.8% the last quarter of 1971."

Transport Central cited several examples at random of schedules which had been lengthened out.

"In 1962, SP's *Shasta Daylight* was carded to cover the 709 miles between Oakland and Portland in 15:20, making 10 stops enroute on a daylight schedule. 1972's *Coast Starlight* requires one hour more to cover the same distance, despite the fact that it . . . makes only six intermediate stops."

Another example was a 1967 New York Central train between Chicago and Detroit which made the run in 5:25 with seven stops enroute. Today's most similar Amtrak train, *The St. Clair*, requires 25 more minutes to cover the distance with only five stops enroute.

Amtrak said it has set a strict five-minute standard for measuring performance on all of its trains. Any arrival five minutes behind schedule is considered late.

## "New Train" (from p. 1)

"Slumbercoach 2001 had bad doors at both ends; a loose drinking fountain which caused an annoying rattle; several defective toilets which allowed track noise to be heard inside the car; and at least one defective heat valve that could not be turned off.

"The windows on the rear observation car which look out behind the train were filthy. The fact that this identical shortcoming existed on the *Broadway* when I rode it in September 1966 from Chicago to New York is probably no mere coincidence. I suspect that the same people who didn't care in 1966 are still assigned to the same job and have the same attitude."



Reprinted courtesy of Don Phillips

The "refurbished" *Broadway Limited* on its May 1 deadhead run from Washington to New York near Friendship Airport about eight miles south of Baltimore.

NARP concluded by urging Weicker "to keep up your efforts to bring about a change in Amtrak top management," and suggested that the Senate Commerce Committee make Amtrak provide specific details on its car renovation program so that the Congress and the public can evaluate it.

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On Chairman Haswell's very next trip on the *Broadway* after the one about which he wrote Senator Weicker, one of the refurbished coaches had no operable air conditioning. Looks like another long hot summer for train riders.

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Mike Royko, distinguished columnist for the *Chicago Daily News*, recently admitted he has been riding trains for years, because, among other things, "the train would not be hijacked, at least by anyone but a junk dealer."

## AMTRAK DISCOURAGING TRAVEL ON MONTANA LINE?

The May 28 edition of the *Butte Montana Standard* reports that Amtrak agents on the west coast have "discouraged" travelers from using the tri-weekly "experimental" *North Coast Hiawatha* route which passes through the more heavily populated Southern Montana region.

In an editorial entitled "Better answers needed from Amtrak", the newspaper charged that seven persons who had expressed interest in riding the line were told by Amtrak ticket agents that "only passengers who planned 'get-off' stops in Montana could ride the southern route."

If they were going straight through, they were told they would have to use the northern Montana, or Hi Line route.

The editorial pointed out that the southern route may be cancelled after Sept. 15 "if Amtrak officials decide it isn't being used enough."

"These reports have generated concern and confusion. Is Amtrak deliberately trying to discourage traffic on the southern route to make an excuse to end passenger trains in southern Montana? Such tactics were suspected even before Amtrak took over passenger operations," declared the newspaper.

## NARP, AMTRAK AND AAR SLUG IT OUT BEFORE ICC

The Interstate Commerce Commission — in a move that was needed years ago — has proposed a set of regulations designed to improve the quality of intercity rail passenger service.

The regulations generally call for Amtrak to supply extra cars to meet peak travel demands; for a nationwide computerized reservations system available on a 24-hour toll-free telephone available throughout the U. S.; for the carriers to pay penalties in case of dishonored reservations; for passenger trains to be given operating preference over freights; for a prohibition against smoking in certain cars; for comfortable passenger car temperatures, and for cars to be kept clean.

Believe it or not, Amtrak and the Association of American Railroads (AAR) oppose these rules.

Amtrak has filed a reply with the ICC stating it has limited funds and the proposed regulations "could put Amtrak out of business and bring an end to intercity rail passenger service."

The AAR appeared to oppose virtually every proposed rule.

For example, the requirement that sleeping cars and their rest rooms be clean was opposed: "This proposed rule reflects the objectives of the [railroads], and they should not be coerced by fiat into an impossible immediate compliance when the standards are subjective and the conditions often are caused by the passengers themselves."

The railroads also opposed a proposed rule to maintain all passenger car temperatures at between 60 and 80 degrees. The AAR said railroads "make every effort to provide comfortable temperatures . . . however, on occasion there are failures in the equipment, and no rule is going to eliminate failures . . ."

A brief filed by NARP and the RAIL Foundation said, "The negativism of AAR contrasts sharply with numerous railroad allegations that the industry is dedicated to the success of Amtrak and will cooperate fully towards that end."

NARP and RAIL also argued for tough regulations which would force Amtrak to implement an improved reservation system, stating that "existing reservation and information services are abysmally inadequate, and have consistently drawn more public criticism and complaint than any other single aspect of rail passenger service."

In conclusion, NARP and RAIL urged the ICC not to "allow this proceeding to gather dust in its files, as did the Adequacies case for a year after the record therein was completed."

## Congress Increases Funding (from p. 1)

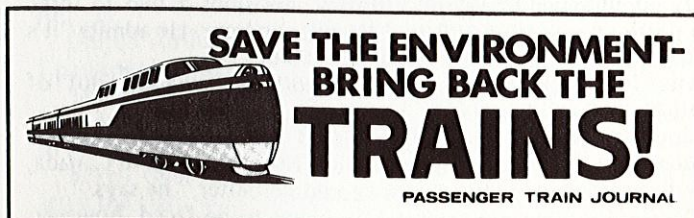
- ♦ Force Amtrak to make detailed monthly reports to Congress and the public with respect to revenues and expenses, patronage and on-time performance.

- ♦ Require Amtrak to directly operate and control all aspects of its service insofar as practicable.

The committee adopted a provision limiting Amtrak officials' salaries to \$60,000 a year, with anything more to come only from the corporation's net profits. This will primarily affect Amtrak President Roger Lewis, who draws \$125,000 annually.

The Comptroller General of the United States is empowered by the bill to audit financial transactions of railroads with which Amtrak contracts for performance of passenger service.

The Secretary of the Dept. of Transportation is required to submit a comprehensive evaluation of all Amtrak operations to Congress by March 15, 1973. (See story, p. 5)



Green and black bumper stickers are available at 50 cents each or five for \$2.00 from *Passenger Train Journal*, 29 E. Broad St., Hopewell, NJ 08525.

# AMTRAK SNAFUS

"Leaving Chicago on the *Broadway Limited* . . . I was sitting in the vastly-overheated lounge car and asked the waiter for a glass of ice water. He refused me with the comment, 'You probably just want to put whiskey in it.' (I had no whiskey on me!) I repeated my request and was given the same answer. . . for the same reason. I honestly believe that this is the first time in my life that I ever asked for a glass of water, where it was available, and was refused." — Allen F. Strehler, Dean of Graduate Studies, Carnegie-Mellon University, in a letter to NARP.

"Recently I had to visit the west coast, and I called our local passenger station (Kingston, Rhode Island) for a reservation. I was told that it would take at least three weeks to hear whether or not I could get a reservation. Since I had to make my trip within the week, I could not wait and I had to take the plane. I asked whether the wait was due to heavy demands for space and I was told that it was primarily due to communications problems — waiting to hear from Chicago. My reaction was a feeling that I was being blocked, since the reason given for a three week wait was not very credible." — Mrs. Barbara Dirlam, Kingston, R.I. in a letter to NARP.

"Does anybody realize that the *Floridian* (formerly *South Wind*) is now 9 hrs. 35 min. slower southbound, from Chicago to Miami, and 13 (T-h-i-r-t-e-e-n) hrs. 15 min. slower northbound, from Miami to Chicago, than it was in the Jan. 10, 1941 L&N timetable?" — Billy P. Haithcoat, Chattanooga, Tenn. in a letter to NARP.

"A recent ride [on the Los Angeles — San Francisco *Daylight*] found one of the two passenger cars had windows so dirty the traveler couldn't see the spring scenery. The air conditioning broke down in one passenger car and the coffee shop car along the way. The window sills were dirty and the upholstery dusty. Service was without a smile." — San Francisco Sunday Examiner & Chronicle reporter Carl Irving.

"When an elderly couple got on . . . and commented that the train was so late their son would really have to wait, the conductor said in a voice loud enough for all to hear that people should learn to wait; it is good to slow down nowadays. When a teen-age couple with skis did not get off the train fast enough, the conductor screamed at them at the top of his lungs to either hurry up or he was going to throw their luggage out on top of them. The entire back car began laughing at the 'show.' Other highlights of the trip: 1. One seat was off its base and lying across the aisle, and 2. The lights failed so we arrived in Grand Central in total darkness." — George H. Conklin in a letter to the Syracuse Post-Standard.

## SENATE VOTES PELL AMENDMENT FOR AMTRAK "CORRIDOR" FUNDS

Senator Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.), during floor debate on the Amtrak authorization bill, offered an amendment to increase Amtrak funding by \$150 million for use in urban "corridors" — heavily populated areas not over 500 miles apart.

In pushing his amendment, Senator Pell — who is also a member of NARP's Advisory Board — emphasized that funds are needed "for improvement of tracks and roadbeds to permit smoother and higher speed operation" and that "the urban corridors are where capital investment has the potential to produce increased patronage and increased revenues that will make better service self-supporting and, in some cases, profitable."

Unfortunately, the Senate-House Commerce Committee conferees eliminated the amendment in favor of a general increase in funds for the corporation.

## LEGISLATION REQUIRES HUGE DOT STUDY OF AMTRAK

Passenger train experts looking for a job need go no further than the U.S. Department of Transportation. It appears as if extra staff will be hired to undertake a mammoth study of Amtrak operations.

The Amtrak bill recently reported out of the House-Senate conference committee contains a provision requiring DOT to begin closely scrutinizing Amtrak to enable the department to make recommendations to Congress about the future of the system.

By March 15, 1973 — only nine months away — the Secretary of DOT is required to transmit to Congress a "comprehensive report on the effectiveness of the Amtrak Act in achieving and promoting intercity rail passenger service and on the effectiveness of the Corporation in implementing the purposes of the Act."

Among Amtrak operations to be evaluated by DOT include adequacy and effectiveness of services, on-time performance, reservations and ticketing, scheduling, equipment, fare structures, routes and immediate and long-term financial needs.

This language gives DOT practically a blank check to investigate every phase of activity in the quasi-public Corporation.

The most ominous language in the bill is that requiring DOT to recommend an "optimum intercity rail passenger service system" which Amtrak should operate after July 1, 1973.

DOT must offer suggestions for "legislative enactment or administrative actions" which would enable Amtrak, after July 1, 1973, to "discontinue more rapidly and efficiently" those routes which do not meet the criteria recommended by DOT for the establishment of an "optimum" Amtrak network.

### "GET TO WORK, AMTRAK" SAYS SENATOR HARTKE

If the people who are the directors and operators of Amtrak do not have the vision and do not have the commitment and do not have the foresight to make Amtrak what the country thinks it should be, and what we in Congress want it to be, then they ought to find themselves a different place to work, because Amtrak is a place in which opportunity is presented for those willing to grasp it.

—Senator Vance Hartke (D-Ind.)  
in a Senate speech, June 8, 1972

Among other items for study, DOT is obliged to make recommendations "for the orderly assumption by the Corporation of the operation and control of all aspects of its intercity rail passenger service" including the performance by Amtrak of all full-time functions solely related to its operations.

An assessment must be made by the study group of "whether the board of directors of the Corporation adequately and fairly represents the members of the public who utilize intercity rail passenger services and, if necessary, recommendations for appropriate changes in the composition" of the board.

An estimate must be made by the department of "potential revenues" for Amtrak from the transportation of mail and express on intercity passenger trains.

Furthermore, the study must include an analysis of the on-time performance of Amtrak trains together with recommendations to eliminate delays "caused by freight train operations."

The Secretary also must offer recommendations regarding the "improvement of tracks and roadbeds" on routes over which Amtrak operates.

NARP — which holds strong views about each of the areas to be studied — looks forward to cooperating with the DOT study group when it begins its work.

## NARP MEMBERS VOTE AGAINST SEATBELTS

The March NARP News asked members to determine if they "agreed" or "disagreed" with the suggestion that "rail passengers be required to use seat belts." The returns were as follows:

Disagree	116
Agree	14

The majority opposed the installation of seat belts, saying that the major advantage of rail travel is freedom of movement and this should not be sacrificed, particularly in lounge and dining cars.

Comparing trains to airplanes, several respondents mentioned that with no "take-off", the seat belt is unnecessary. And in comparison to autos, trains are in danger of derailing, rarely "colliding."

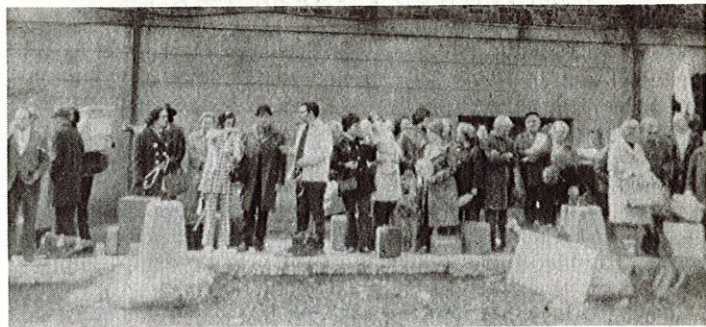
Instead of spending money to install seatbelts, suggestions were given to improve equipment, tracks, roadbed and signal systems for greater passenger safety.

Those in favor of seat belts usually said that they would be inclined to favor them only if additional safety would truly be acquired. Several felt that seat belts should be installed, but used only at the passenger's discretion.

### AIRPORT COST

An official of the Dallas-Ft. Worth airport points out that the huge facility, when completed, will cost \$340 million. "We continue to be on target for our July, 1973 opening date," said Ernest E. Dean, Deputy Executive Director. Ironically, July, 1973 is when Amtrak is free to begin to discontinue trains.

## VERMONT HOLDS A "PASSENGER-IN"



Reprinted courtesy of Lawrie Brown

Above is a partial view of the nearly 100 residents of Brattleboro — many carrying suitcases — who recently attended a "passenger-in" to show interest in bringing Amtrak service to Vermont. The group wants the Montrealer restored between New York and Montreal via their city. The unique demonstration was organized by Russell Stockman of the Vermont Association of Railroad Passengers. VARP has published its first newsletter. For a copy, write VARP, Polygraphic Lane, North Bennington, Vt. 05257.

### HAS SOUTH CAROLINA MEMBER SET RECORD?

A NARP member in Camden, S.C. — who is also active with the Georgia Association of Railroad Passengers — has "sold" a high school senior class on a round trip to Orlando by Amtrak. Member Barney Ransom has written 35 letters to high schools in his area recommending train travel "which they didn't even know existed." Barney has convinced people to travel over 74,000 passenger-miles in the past 12 months, and is looking forward to future success.

## AMTRAK TURNING AWAY INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS

### 1: AMTRAK SAYS "NO" TO DEMOCRATS AND REPUBLICANS

Amtrak is faced with such a great demand for travel this summer that it's turning away possibly thousands of potential passengers.

Among those turned down, according to a June 16 article by Stephen M. Aug in the *Washington Evening Star*, were the Democratic and Republican national committees, which requested special trains to carry delegates to the national conventions in Miami during July and August.

The principal problem, Amtrak officials told the reporter, is that the corporation simply doesn't have enough equipment to handle the demand.

An Amtrak official said the carrier had received two requests from the political parties for special trains which would have operated from the Northwest — presumably Boston — down to Miami, picking up delegates at intermediate stops. One request reportedly was for space for 750 passengers.

At 22 passengers per sleeping car, that would have required nearly 40 sleepers.

Charles Warnick of Amtrak told the *Star* that aside from both political parties, "we've turned down every request for a special train until October."

In a letter to Amtrak, NARP Chairman Anthony Haswell urged Amtrak to consider extra trains for both political conventions, pointing out that at least 50,000 persons are expected by the Democrats and 20,000 by the Republicans.

James Dietz, who handles charters and special trains for Amtrak, said the corporation is running only a few special trains — principally in the Northeast where on Saturday spare cars are available, or where, because some trains are operated only three times weekly cars are available on off-days.

### 2: AMTRAK SAYS "NO" TO TEXANS

It has been learned through a NARP member that Amtrak has refused space to 25 people who wanted to ride in sleeping accommodations between Ft. Worth and Kansas City on the *Texas Chief*.

The group was informed that "no spare sleepers" were available in Texas and the move would be cancelled. Previously, the travelers had been given a "99% guarantee" by Santa Fe and Amtrak that an extra sleeper would be added.

NARP related the incident to the Association of Private Railcar Owners, an organization trying to persuade Amtrak to permit movement of private cars for group and individual travel.

The NARP letter said:

"This incident points out, once again, why Amtrak should be using the private car fleet available at modest sums.

"We should keep this performance failure in mind when — in 1973 — the Office of Management and Budget [within the White House] insists that the *Texas Chief* be discontinued as a means of reducing Amtrak's deficit."

This inability to meet customer demand occurred on one of the heaviest money-losers operated by Amtrak. In May and June 1971, the *Texas Chief* had a revenue of \$743,000 while expenses were \$1,414,000.

### ORDER TICKETS BY MAIL

"The new Amtrak ticket mailing service [in Chicago] has received enthusiastic response from our Chicago passengers for the convenience it offers. Ticket mail-outs now account for almost one-third of our total Chicago business." — Amtrak President Roger Lewis in a May 18 speech to the Traffic Club of Chicago.

## SENATOR CASE WAS MOVING FORCE ON AMTRAK APPROPRIATION

Amtrak funding bills must be approved not only by the Commerce Committees of the two Houses of Congress, but also by the Appropriations Committees.

It was in the Senate Appropriations Committee that Senator Clifford P. Case (R-N.J.) led the battle to increase Amtrak's funding, despite Amtrak's claim that the \$170 million requested was adequate for operations.

Senator Case has believed for quite some time that Amtrak is so under-funded that its chances of survival are severely limited.

He made the motion to add \$100 million to the Amtrak bill which was adopted by the committee.

If that action had not been taken before the Commerce Committees of the two Houses had met in conference, it is doubtful that Amtrak would have received the \$50 million increase ultimately agreed upon.

### AMTRAK BECOMES TYPICAL RAILROAD

"Observers report that Amtrak is now almost completely dominated by its Operations Department, headed by ex-PRR man Pat King. King is bringing in many PRR 'types', and releasing a number of persons including several well-liked ex-Federal Railroad Administration employees that helped set up Amtrak and then took jobs in the Corporation." — Transport Central, June 5, 1972.

### TWO VIEWS: HOW TO JUDGE RAILROADS

Southern Railway President W. Graham Claytor, Jr., said at the company's annual meeting that "passenger revenues on Southern accounts for slightly more than one third of 1% of the company's revenues, an almost insignificant contribution," according to Washington Evening Star reporter Stephen M. Aug. Despite this, he said, "everything we read about with respect to the railroads seems to be about the passenger business." Claytor then "called for a more balanced presentation of railroad operations in the news media."

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"When Southern Pacific president Biaggini, whose viewpoint is perhaps the industry's most publicized anachronism, comments that the railroads shouldn't be judged by the dirty windows of a delapidated passenger car, you know nothing has changed. That's exactly how they have been judged, would always be judged, and if Mr. Biaggini lived two lifetimes he wouldn't see it otherwise. What a formula for winning legislative esteem: inflict the poorest treatment on the largest number of folks in the widest possible public view for the longest possible time, then express surprise about being judged by it." — NARP member Ray Hannon, Dallas, Texas, in a letter to Railway Age magazine.

### New Station For D.C.

An agreement to provide financing for the transformation of Washington's Union Station into a National Visitors Center has reportedly been reached between the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and two New York banks.

The Federal Government would provide \$16 million to renovate the facility and lease it from the railroads for \$3 million per year.

The action was hailed by NARP because it will reduce by approximately 25% the staggering cost of operating trains into the Washington terminal.

The station — with operating costs approximately \$14 million annually — has been described as "probably the most costly operation of its type in the nation" by Carl R. Englund, a consultant to the U. S. Dept. of Transportation.

"Representative Kenneth J. Gray (D-Ill.) is to be commended for his persistence — without his dedication there would be no National Visitors Center," declared NARP.

## AMTRAK MAY HAVE CHECKED DOWNTREND IN RAIL TRAVEL

Amtrak apparently reversed the long downtrend in rail passenger traffic during the first quarter, Roger Lewis said in a speech before the Chicago Traffic Club.

Amtrak drew up its 1972 budget on the assumption that rail passenger traffic, which had been slipping at a rate of 10% to 15% a year prior to Amtrak's establishment, wouldn't decline any further this year.

During the first calendar quarter, however, Amtrak's revenue actually increased 8.1% from budgeted levels, Lewis added.

"It is too soon to draw any sweeping conclusions from these figures, but I do feel that this does give us a solid basis for hope, if not downright optimism, that we have turned the corner," he said.

Mr. Lewis said revenue increased without the benefit of improvements currently being adopted, such as improved and refurbished cars and special combination tour packages.

Despite improving revenue, Mr. Lewis repeated earlier projections that Amtrak's loss will be about \$154 million for the current fiscal year, ending June 30, and about \$124 million for fiscal 1973.



Buttons with safety pin on back available from Amtrak

### HOW DID YOUR SENATORS AND CONGRESSMEN VOTE?

NARP has available for distribution to its members reprints of Congressional Record reports on floor debates and roll call votes on the Amtrak legislation. Write for your free copy.

### TEMPORARY CHANGE IN NEWSLETTER

Because of extremely heavy travel by the NARP staff, the June and August newsletters have been eliminated. Instead, NARP will print 8-page editions in July and September. We regret the inability to stay "monthly".



### Support NARP — Bring In A New Member



Yes, I want to aid the cause of better rail passenger service. I understand I will receive a membership card and a monthly newsletter to keep me informed of developments.

Enclosed is my remittance for the category checked. I understand that \$3.00 of this amount is for a one-year subscription to the newsletter.

- |   |  |
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Note: NARP members should not use this form to renew. It would be helpful if members wait until they receive the renewal reminder, and use the special coded envelope enclosed with it.

## NARP AND RAIL CONTINUE COURT BATTLE TO RESTORE RIO GRANDE SERVICE

A brief has been filed by NARP and the RAIL Foundation in the U. S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia appealing a lower court decision holding that the Attorney General of the United States could not be compelled to enforce the Amtrak Act against the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad Co. (D&RGW).

NARP and RAIL stated that the D&RGW violated the law by discontinuing, on June 14, 1971, the Salt Lake City—Ogden portion of the *Rio Grand Zephyr* which ran from Denver to Ogden.

The brief pointed out that Section 404 of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 has been violated by D&RGW. The section reads: "Unless it has entered into a contract with [Amtrak] . . . no railroad may discontinue any intercity passenger train whatsoever prior to January 1, 1975. . ." D&RGW did not join Amtrak, yet discontinued a portion of its Denver-Ogden trains.

NARP and RAIL originally brought the suit in 1971 in the U. S. District Court of the District of Columbia. In that proceeding, Judge William B. Bryant said "the evidence in the case is overwhelming on the physical facts involved. The railroad has done exactly what they were refused permission to do and, according to the statute, that is a violation of the law."

Unfortunately, Judge Bryant was reluctant to issue an order forcing the Attorney General to sue the railroad.

### NEW ZEALAND HAS NEW TRAINS

"New Zealand has resuscitated its passenger trains and they are alive and breathing profitably, according to a dispatch from **United Press International.**"

An injection of \$10.2 million worth of Japanese and American equipment and a huge advertising campaign has put people back on trains.

It has also provided tourist with the biggest travel bargain in the Pacific — the new *Silver Star* linking Auckland with Wellington.

The most expensive item on its dining car menu is porter-house steak at \$1.85.

The stubborn New Zealanders don't agree with the American idea that the day of the elegant passenger train is finished. Nor do they have any intention of competing against the airlines in speed.

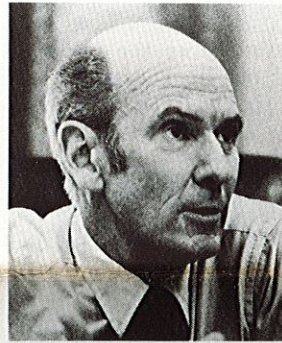
"What we offer today is an opportunity for comfortable, prestige travel," explained Railways Spokesman Mike Burgess.

## FRIENDS OF THE RAILROAD PASSENGER

### Senator Alan Cranston

An amendment to provide an additional \$15 million to develop "experimental and expanded rail passenger service in addition to the Amtrak basic system" was strongly supported in Senate debate recently by Senator Alan Cranston.

The California Democrat noted that the amendment provided an opportunity to include the San Joaquin Valley route between Los Angeles and San Francisco in the Amtrak system.



"Furthermore," said Cranston, "the Valley route provides access to the magnificent Sierra Nevadas, with their three national parks — Yosemite, Sequoia, and Kings Canyon. Since the private auto poses a growing threat to our parks, it is quite appropriate that our federal policy should be to encourage and promote the utilization of public transport systems by the millions who annually visit these parks."

Senator Cranston is not solely concerned with expanding rail passenger service in California. He has co-sponsored legislation which would have retained the 7% automobile excise tax as a source of funds for mass transit.

He has also sponsored legislation to create an urban mass transit trust fund.

"The Nation's highways have been built with 90% Federal funds and 10% local moneys. I believe the same ratio that has been so successful in building the Nation's highways should be applied to the task of building an adequate public transportation system," declared the Senator.

### MEETING NOTICE:

The annual meeting of the members of the National Association of Railroad Passengers shall be held at 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, July 25, 1972 at the National Lawyer's Club, 1815 "H" St., N.W., Washington, D.C.

## NEWS from NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

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Diane Gordon, Executive Secretary

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