

Greyhound Chief Blasts Amtrak at Inflation Confab

UMTA recognizes that light rail transit may have a significant potential for American cities. This is why we have sponsored the development of new specifications for a Standard Light Rail Vehicle suitable for use on existing systems, such as that of Boston, or on a new system. The prototype vehicles are now being constructed and will be tested at DOT's High Speed Ground Test Center before their introduction into commercial service. UMTA also plans to initiate detailed studies of light rail transit parameters in order to make more cities aware of light rail's system characteristics.

—Frank C. Herring
Urban Mass Transportation Administrator



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS**

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RAIL FARES CUT: Beginning Sept. 9, Amtrak reduced fares on long-haul runs west of Chicago in hopes to stimulate more off-season travel to Spokane's Expo 74 and thru-out the West. Fare cuts average about 9 per cent. Round-trip coach fare from Chicago to Spokane, for example, fell from the summer's \$189 to \$174.50.

New York and Michigan Seek Bond Approval for Transit

Two powerful states, New York and Michigan, will have bond issues on the November ballot seeking voter approval for transportation bond issues. Success in these states would provide encouragement to other states to act in similar fashion.

In New York, Governor Malcolm Wilson has approved the immediate use of \$4 million from the State's \$30 million immediate action rail preservation program for Long Island Rail Road improvements in Suffolk County. Voter approval in November of the \$250 million rail improvement bond issue, he said, will make another \$46 million available for further track and facilities improvements which will greatly enhance rail service on Long Island.

The New York program contemplates restoration of eight railroad passenger lines, preservation of freight service, improvement of two commuter lines and a rail safety program.

In Michigan Governor William Milliken has proposed a billion-dollar bond issue, which would be divided as follows: \$540 million for urban public transit development in Southeastern Michigan, \$20 million for development of new transit systems, \$362 million for statewide improvements in inter-city rail (passenger and freight) and bus systems; \$100 million for airport development and improvement; \$50 million for Great Lakes port development and \$25 million for non-motorized facilities.

If the transportation bond issue is approved, the State Highway Commission will recommend establishment of high-speed passenger rail service in five corridors linking all major urban areas in the southern half of the Lower Peninsula. Intermediate speed (60 mph) passenger service would be recommended on 500 route miles between out-state urban areas and tourist regions.

Haswell Offers Rebuttal

Fortunately for Amtrak, NARP Chairman Anthony Haswell was a delegate to the Transportation Industry Conference on Inflation, held in Los Angeles September 20. Mr. Haswell was the only person in the White House-sponsored meeting who was able to reply to an attack on Amtrak by James Kerrigan, president of Greyhound Bus.

Mr. Kerrigan urged that the federal budget be reduced by cutting appropriations for Amtrak. Kerrigan repeated the standard Greyhound line that busses could do the job more efficiently and that Amtrak is unfair subsidized competition. In reply, Haswell pointed out that busses lack the potential of modern trains of attracting large numbers of people away from autos and airplanes; that the bus industry has been the beneficiary of substantial government spending in past years; that the coming of Amtrak was a boon to bus operators in that half the intercity passenger trains were discontinued overnight in May 1971; and that Amtrak's productivity (passenger miles per dollar of federal expenditure) can be greatly improved.

Mr. Kerrigan's attack on Amtrak was somewhat surprising in view of the recent highly publicized Greyhound-Amtrak agreement to sell thru rail-bus tickets and otherwise cooperate. Amtrak was not represented at the conference.

Mr. Haswell also presented a paper on rail freight service productivity, which among other things advocated public ownership and maintenance of rail track and roadbed.

National Rail Trust Fund Is Proposed by Gov. Shapp

Pennsylvania Governor Milton Shapp, a member of the NARP advisory board, has proposed a National Rail Trust Fund similar to the Highway Trust Fund. He believes it would provide \$12.9 billion into the nation's railroads over six years, for rehabilitation and modernization.

"It's time that we recognize that the engine that has been pulling the American economic system is completely out-dated, and no amount of tinkering, tuning or adjusting can possibly provide adequate power to meet the needs of our modern society," he said.

The governor said his proposal for a national rail trust fund was not a subsidy program or a program to nationalize railroads, merge them or splinter existing lines.

He said it would operate in this fashion:

- Railroads would collect a 5 per cent surcharge on freight revenues and pay it into the fund.
- Government-backed obligations would be issued to finance railroad improvements, the debt securities to be financed over 30 years by the surcharge.
- Railroads would get grants from the fund in proportion to their surcharge collections.
- A revolving loan fund would be available to finance rolling stock purchases.

Shapp compared the idea to the Highway Trust Fund established by President Dwight Eisenhower, which he said had collected \$58.7 billion in its first 18 years from user taxes on gasoline, tires and other auto accessories, and is now collecting \$5.6 billion per year.

He said the highway fund has paid off the original \$55-billion investment in the interstate highway system, and the continuing income will allow its expansion.

Ex-NARP Lobbyist Bruce Pike Employed by Amtrak as 'Hill' Rep.

Bruce Pike, former lobbyist for NARP on Capitol Hill, has joined Amtrak in a similar capacity. His title at Amtrak is "director of Congressional affairs".

Mr. Pike at one time was assistant executive secretary-treasurer of the Railway Labor Executives Association and executive director of the Conference of Transportation Trades, AFL-CIO. More recently, he was lobbyist for the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks, and other unions, as well as the National Association of Railroad Passengers.

Amtrak also announced the appointment of Jerry W. Friedheim, former assistant secretary of defense for public affairs, as vice president, public and government affairs. Mr. Friedheim is a former newsman.

Prior to joining the Defense Department, Friedheim had worked in Washington on both House and Senate staffs including positions as Press Secretary, legislative assistant and executive assistant to Sen. John Tower of Texas.

Amtrak Has Equipment Shortages But Political Candidates Do Not

Amtrak, which inherited a fleet of aging passenger equipment, still suffers from acute equipment shortages, but there seem to be plenty of passenger hardware for politicians.

In Indiana, Mayor Richard Lugar of Indianapolis, the Republican candidate for the United States Senate, has announced a 500-mile whistle-stop train tour of 18 counties. And, in Washington, D.C., the Democratic national leaders were until recently planning a nation-wide whistle-stop train. However, latest word is that the Democratic Special has been cancelled.

The "Lugar Buck-Stopper Special" will be a three-coach train which will visit Frankfort, Lafayette, Delphi, Logansport, Peru, Rochester and Plymouth, Oct. 4, 5 and 6.

While most of us fondly recall the era when even presidential candidates campaigned by passenger train, 1974 seems an inappropriate time to divert passenger equipment to this purpose. Hopefully, in a few years, Amtrak will have so much equipment that it will be actively soliciting campaign trains. But not now, Roger.

As every rush-hour motorist knows, the vast majority of commuters do not ride trains each workday. They drive their own cars, creep through traffic, bend fenders and lose their tempers. Yet our nation's railroads—for all their fuel efficiency, their inherent economies, their widespread network of fixed facilities, and their heritage as pathfinders in American transportation—do nowhere near the job they could be doing.

—John W. Ingram
Federal Railroad Administrator

Net earnings of Auto-Train Corporation for the fiscal year ending April 30, 1974, were up 95% on an increase of revenues of 52% over last year. Gross revenues amounted to \$21,301,762 resulting in net earnings, after giving effect to tax-loss carryforwards, of \$1,568,890 or \$1.05 per share. Comparable figures for the prior year (after giving retroactive effect to a 5% stock dividend) resulted in net earnings after tax-loss carryforwards and extraordinary items of \$804,872 or \$.54 per share on gross revenues of \$13,976,335.

SAVE RR STATIONS — RUN TRAINS

A bill has been introduced in Congress to help urban centers purchase railroad stations and convert them to new uses. Lawrence O. Houston of the Department of Housing and Urban Development has a better idea. "The best way to save railroad stations," he said, "is to expand rail service and make railroad travel again a matter of pleasure and convenience."

Rehabilitation Under Way At Several Amtrak Stations

Amtrak's "repair and rehabilitation" program, designed to give the Amtrak image to every station Amtrak uses, has been extended to several new areas. Work is progressing on 11 Milwaukee Road stations served by the Empire Builder and North Coast Hiawatha between Chicago and Minneapolis, and on 21 Illinois Central Gulf stations between Chicago and New Orleans, served by the Panama Limited.

Renovation has started at a new commissary established at Hialeah, Florida, and approval has been given for new stations at Roanoke and Bluefield, Virginia, which will be stops on the new Norfolk-Cincinnati route. Other projects include:

Norfolk-Cincinnati route

Repair work will begin later this month at the following stations on the new Amtrak route: Norfolk, Petersburg, Suffolk, Crewe, Farmville, Lynchburg, Christiansburg and Narrows, VA; Welch and Williamson, WV and South Portsmouth, KY.

Boston-Chicago route

Field surveys have been made and preliminary planning is underway for repair and rehabilitation of stations along this second planned Amtrak route.

Jacksonville, FL

Major expansion of the Jacksonville station has been approved including enlargement of the parking area and construction of a separate track area for mail handling and train servicing. Bids will be taken in October and work should be completed by spring.

Poinciana, FL

Poinciana, FL will become a stop on the Champion and Silver Star, September 15, offering passengers convenient access to Walt Disney World. A temporary terminal building has been constructed with a 900 ft. track side canopy and 1800 ft. station platform. Parking has been provided for 150 cars.

Detroit, MI

Amtrak and the Penn Central met September 11 to finalize plans for reopening the main entrance to the Detroit station. The State of Michigan has agreed to partially finance repairs which would give passengers direct entry to the waiting room and ticket area.

Kingston, RI

This month a Penn Central crew is completing repairs begun by volunteers at the Kingston, RI station. The interior is being painted and floors sanded and re-varnished. Volunteers previously painted the exterior a striking "Newport blue" with white trim and refinished interior benches and woodwork.

Chicago Union Station

Part one of a major renovation of Union Station Chicago has been completed. The main waiting room and entrance have been cleaned and painted. Now work has begun on the relocation of commuter ticket counters to make room for a new lounge and baggage handling facility.

AMTRAK BRINGS SOUTHERN RAILROAD INTO ITS RESERVATION SYSTEM

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 part of this amount is for a one-year subscription to the newsletter.

Contributing \$10
 Participating \$25

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Name _____

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(NARP members should use this form to renew. It would be helpful if members wait until they receive the coded renewal reminder.)

W. L. Smith, president of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad Company (The Milwaukee Road), recently sent this memo to all vice presidents and key operating personnel:

"Since Amtrak came in to being on May 1, 1971, the Milwaukee Road has gained a reputation for providing full cooperation with Amtrak. Last month the Secretary of Transportation presented to the Congress a report of Amtrak operation. One exhibit of this report shows the record of on-time performance for the first three years of Amtrak operation. Of the twelve Amtrak roads, our performance was 3rd in 1971 and 1st in 1972 and 2nd in 1973. So far in 1974 it has been at or next to the top. Our objective is to be the best performer in the industry. It is in the best interests of the travelling public, Amtrak and the Milwaukee Road that this objective be met. Your continued attention to this important segment of our business will assist in its achievement."

Amtrak Proposes \$1 Billion Equipment, Track Program

Amtrak has proposed a five-year financial plan that includes \$1 billion for improving tracks and increasing average train speeds to as much as 110 miles per hour on several runs.

Amtrak wants to buy 235 double-deck passenger cars and 200 single-level cars along with 25 new electric locomotives — at a total cost of \$263 million.

The track upgrading program would cover five fiscal years beginning with 1975. The railroad passenger corporation would make improvements and increase average speeds on 12 routes, with the top speed on each exceeding the proposed average.

IS SKYBUS DEAD?

Pittsburgh's controversial \$25 million per mile "Skybus" may be nearing the end of the line. At the Sixth International Conference on Urban Transportation, held in Pittsburgh Sept. 9-10, delegates learned that Pennsylvania Governor Milton Shapp continues to withhold state funds; UMTA has a new study in progress which Gov. Shapp believes will be negative, and one of Skybus' former supporters, County Commissioner Thomas Foerster stated that "The Skybus program is dead." UMTA officials said Federal funds promised to Pittsburgh can be used for a rail commuter system instead. UMTA stated — as it has many times over the years — that "its Allegheny County's decision." UMTA denied that it insists the Federal funds be used only for Skybus.

Amtrak and the Southern Railway have signed an agreement bringing Southern into Amtrak's nationwide toll-free computerized reservation and information system (ARTS).

The agreement became effective September 1. Under its terms information about all Southern train services will be included along with Amtrak services in ARTS computers and ticketing for Southern trains and Amtrak trains and connections between the two will be possible by 24-hour, toll-free telephone. Southern will pay Amtrak for the cost of the computer services plus all supplied equipment. Provision for expansion is included in the agreement.

ARTS (Automatic Reservation and Ticketing System) was installed initially by Amtrak in the Northeast Corridor in April of 1973. It then was expanded incrementally until it now provides 24-hour, daily toll-free public telephone access for all Amtrak inter-city rail passenger services. A single computer in Washington, D.C., serves five regional reservations and information centers. Additional computer access terminals are located in stations and ticket offices throughout the country. Currently the system is handling about 65,000 telephone calls a day.

All Amtrak service in Houston, Texas, has been consolidated at the Southern Pacific passenger terminal, making it easier for passengers to transfer between the east-west Sunset Limited (New Orleans to Los Angeles) and the northbound Lone Star (Houston-Chicago). The Lone Star formerly used the Santa Fe terminal. The consolidated terminal will be remodeled to provide a new ticket counter and expanded passenger lounge.

Amtrak has added ticket clerks to several previously unmanned stations this month necessitating various degrees of station repairs: Lima and Canton, OH and Battle Creek, Jackson and Niles, MI. Repair work at Lima included interior and exterior painting, upgrading of the ticket counter, floor repair and resurfacing of the platform and parking area.

Amtrak and the City of Canton are considering razing the old Canton station and replacing it with a smaller, modern structure. Amtrak-financed repairs at Battle Creek, Jackson and Niles will consist primarily of interior and exterior paint, installation of additional lighting and platform and parking lot repairs.

CLEVELAND TRAINS — It will be at least spring and maybe later before the Chicago-Boston route will bring Amtrak trains into Cleveland for the first time. Cleveland currently is the largest American city that does not have Amtrak service. The delay is mostly a matter of track conditions and of deciding whether to use the old station in Cleveland or build a new one, according to Amtrak.

The United States Railway Association has asked for a four-month extension of its Oct. 29 deadline to come up with a preliminary plan to restructure the bankrupt railroads of the Northeast. Chairman Edward G. Jordon also asked for eight million dollars more in funds immediately and 14 million later to complete the initial work in carving out a plan to put the roads on a profitable track. Eighteen million had originally been appropriated.

• *The focus for improved rail passenger service should be nationwide and the commitment as ambitious and aggressive as that made in the 50s toward the building of the Interstate Highway System. That program... has cost the government \$54 billion. It was money well spent... The nation would do well to turn its attention now to building a national railway system for the same reasons it built the interstate—its own interest.* •

—Miami Herald

Passenger Sues Amtrak, Travel Agency But Court Releases Agency From Case.

Travel Agent Maurice Klebolt, Cliff Travel, has been released from a municipal court suit naming him along with Amtrak for faulty services reportedly encountered by a passenger on the San Francisco Zephyr to Denver.

Passenger Jack Bowman complained in a letter to Amtrak's vice president of passenger services, Don Innes, of "hot bedrooms, no towels in bathrooms, no lounges, no ice water and a filthy diner." He filed suit requesting ticket refund and \$100 damages.

Since the judge has released Klebolt from the suit on grounds that an agent is not responsible for equipment of the carrier, the plaintiff is expected to refile the suit against Amtrak.

Bill Stokes, former general manager of the Bay Area Rapid Transit in California, is in Washington to assume his new duties as executive director of the American Public Transit Association. The association, which will officially go into business in November, is being formed by the merger of the Institute for Rapid Transit and the American Transit Association. Both organizations are in the process of moving to new APTA headquarters, to be located at 1100 17th St., NW, Washington, D.C.

Burlington Northern recently marked a "first" when Cindy Burow, 20, completed her inaugural run as a railroad brakeman. Miss Burow serves on the Hastings-Lincoln (Neb.) division's extra board, which means she's called when a regular crew member doesn't show up. She thinks someday she may try for fireman or even engineer. Other U.S. railroads already employ female brakemen, and the Santa Fe Railway also has female engineers.

The Investigations Subcommittee of the House Commerce Committee has produced four interesting reports on Amtrak operations and policies. NARP members may obtain copies of these reports without charge by writing to: Investigations Subcommittee, 2323 Rayburn Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20515.

NARP Member Defends Southern Railroad on 'Crescent' Issue

NARP NEWS in its last issue carried a letter from Thomas Hoffman attacking the Southern Railroad for alleged plans to discontinue the "Southern Crescent." LeRoy O. King, Jr., NARP contributing member, offers this reply:

Dear Sir: While I like passenger trains (or obviously I wouldn't belong to NARP) it ill behooves your newsletter to support calling Graham Claytor a liar by publishing Thomas Hoffman's letter without comment.

I haven't ridden the Crescent, but I have seen it. In my opinion, it is, at least, the cleanest train in the United States and from commentary I have heard, it is better than Amtrak's best. Thus, Southern is fulfilling its obligation.

Southern, also obviously, didn't join Amtrak so that they would have the privilege of getting out of the passenger train business when the law allows. As I recall, *FORTUNE* lists losses from passenger operations by the Southern at \$5 million a year. I see no evidence that passenger trains, although I believe they are necessary — make money anywhere.

No doubt, piggyback trains would be operated on discontinuance of passenger service — but the increase in labor costs would certainly not be a big item in comparison with a \$5 million loss.

The Southern must be one of the best-managed railroads in the world since it is one of the best money-makers in the world. Thus, two things seem evident to me. First, Mr. Claytor, who is a railfan, can see the need for passenger trains. And second, since he is not head of a charitable institution, he has no alternative but to discontinue passenger service when legal to do so. This doesn't make him a liar.

Admittedly, some way must be found to continue the service, but losses must be covered, and a profit incentive must be offered for its continuance. The sooner all realize this, the sooner we will have a viable passenger train system. Polemics won't do it.

"We can have greater service reliability if we want it enough and are willing to work hard enough to get it."

—W. Graham Claytor, President
The Southern Railroad

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Anthony Haswell, Chairman and Executive Director
Robert J. Casey, News Director
Linda Sturgill, Executive Secretary

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