



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

Vol. 11, No. 11 December, 1977

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(No. 10 was mailed December 13)

RETURN REQUESTED

House Insists More Amtrak Funds

On Nov. 30 the House of Representatives voted 258-138 to reject the entire \$7.6 billion FY 1978 Supplemental Appropriations Bill and instructed the House Conferees to agree to the Senate's original recommendation for Amtrak of \$18 million. Earlier, House Conferees had insisted on an Amtrak supplemental of no more than \$8 million.

"By our motion to recommit it is my intention...to insure that decisions with respect to Amtrak's operations proceed in logical fashion and are not made under the gun of financial desperation."

—Rep. Silvio O. Conte (R-Mass.)
Nov. 30 on the House floor

Despite the objections of the chairmen of both the full Appropriations Committee (Rep. George Mahon, D-Tex.) and its Transportation Subcommittee (Rep. John McFall, D-Cal.), the funding increase passed by a nearly two to one margin. This most recent Congressional action has halted, at least temporarily, Amtrak's plans to discontinue long-haul routes in an attempt to live within an inadequate funding level.

All Amtrak trains, including the "Floridian", are to continue operating at least until the Congress has had an opportunity to examine and act upon the route structure proposal due from Secretary of Transportation Brock Adams on March 1. Language instructing Amtrak to seek no further funds for the remainder of

the fiscal year was stricken from the Conference Committee Report.

Efforts to put together enough support to win on the House floor were led by House members from Florida, Massachusetts, Texas, Tennessee, Montana, and Minnesota. Key legislators from these states insisted that the nation needs its medium and long-distance passenger train services. When the issue came to a vote, House members from Northeast Corridor states joined their colleagues from elsewhere in the country, voting overwhelmingly to support the call for increased Amtrak funds.

What happened on the House floor. It took more than a simple 'yes or no' vote to get Amtrak's funds increased to the \$18 million level. In fact it took three votes, along with some careful strategy, to counter the parliamentary maneuverings of those who opposed the measure. Here is a brief account of the floor action on Nov. 30:

Shortly after the House convened, Appropriations Committee Chairman George Mahon called up the major piece of legislation for the day, the Conference Report on H.R. 9375, the Supplemental Appropriations Bill for FY 1978.

Mr. Mahon told the House that the bill included sums in excess of \$7 billion and recited a list of some of the items included therein: \$4.5 billion for waste treatment plants; \$67 million for surface mining reclamation and enforcement; \$273 million for

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NARP INTERVIEWS REP. AL GORE, JR.

(Congressman Gore is a freshman Democrat representing Tennessee's 4th Congressional District. He spoke with NARP Assistant Director Tom Crikelair on December 16 in the Congressman's Washington, D.C. office.)

NARP: Congressman Gore, you were the individual on the House floor who offered and fought for the motion to increase Amtrak's supplemental funds to the full \$18 million level. Can you tell us how it was that you personally came to be so deeply involved with the Amtrak issue?

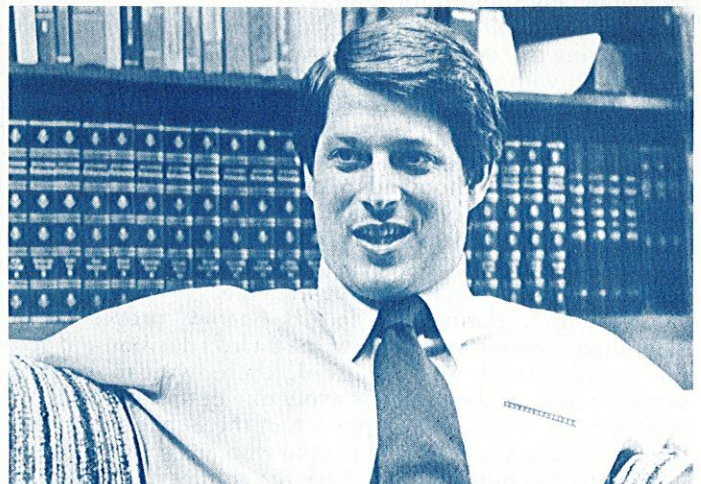
GORE: Well, I believe very strongly that we need a national rail passenger system in this country. The energy crisis mandates more efficient forms of transportation. And I think it would be foolish to begin dismantling Amtrak at a time when we need to expand and improve our rail system.

I grew up in and around railroads. As a reporter for the *Nashville Tennessean* I worked across the street from the station in Nashville. I watched people dismayed when rail service began to be lost one train at a time throughout this country, and I think it's time we had a nationwide vision to revitalize our rail service.

NARP: On Nov. 30 the House accepted your motion to add additional funds for Amtrak and voted to send the entire \$7.6 billion Supplemental Appropriations Bill back to Conference. To

our knowledge, this is something that is very rarely done. What do you think was the significance of the Nov. 30 vote?

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THE DOT ROUTE STUDY

EDITORIAL

The DOT study can only be a first step. There can be no implementation of any DOT proposal — other than through existing "Route and Service Criteria" — without authorizing legislation from the House and Senate Committee Committees. Any implementation procedures set up will be almost certain to include public input, probably via the Office of Rail Public Counsel.

Meanwhile, now is the time for NARP members to make their interests and demands known to the Administration. The Nov. 30 House vote should represent a clear message. But still, *DOT Secretary Adams has proposed once again a \$500 million oper-*

ANOTHER VIEW

"Transportation Secretary Brock Adams is probably the most truly political of all the Transportation Secretaries to date. He is throwing Amtrak's fate to the public, and as a politician he will be inclined to listen if the public responds strongly enough."

—*Rail Travel News* editorial (Dec.)

ating budget for Amtrak for FY 1979!! This just perpetuates, and indeed worsens, the need to cut routes to stay within a given budget ceiling.

Service cancellations in no way constitute constructive solutions to Amtrak's financial situation. What is needed, more than anything else, is an intelligently planned capital investment program designed to reduce operating costs and to make possible revenue-generating frequency increases. *Amtrak requested \$347 million for capital improvements for FY 1979. Adams has recommended \$111 million!!*

What about the 'Southern Crescent'? The Washington, D.C. — New Orleans route is clearly an essential component of the nation's passenger train network. We expect that this train will be included as part of any system proposal forthcoming from the DOT.

Can the public be assured that the DOT study will be based upon something other than a predetermined budgetary con-

REP. AL GORE, JR. (cont'd. from p. 1)

GORE: The most significant thing about the vote was that it demonstrated very clearly that a large majority of the Congress supports Amtrak and supports the effort to establish a nationwide rail passenger service. The Conferees and the members of the Subcommittees most closely associated with Amtrak felt differently. But the House as a whole — and the Senate as a whole — supports Amtrak overwhelmingly. That's what the vote on November 30 demonstrated.

Now the trick was to get the vote. And the procedural wrangling back and forth was primarily over whether we were going to be able to get a vote forced, whether we were going to be able to force a vote or not. Once a vote was forced, then a majority of the Congress had an opportunity to demonstrate overwhelming support for Amtrak.

NARP: Do you think that the public played any significant role in determining the outcome of the Nov. 30 vote?

GORE: Oh, without question. I think almost every member of the House of Representatives received communications — letters, telegrams, telephone calls — from people who share my conviction that we need an efficient rail system in this country, and there are many thousands of people throughout this country who see this need very clearly and are willing to fight for it. Before the vote was taken, members of Congress heard from people who are committed to a rail system in this country. It played a key role, an indispensable role, in winning the vote.

In addition, during the formal hearing process on the "Floridian", immediately prior to the Board's decision and before the Supplemental was approved, there was an enormous outpouring from the public at every one of these hearings. The impressive turn-out, the eloquence of the public spokesmen, I think played a key role. The people who are committed to rail service in this country I think have the arguments on their side.

Did you know that the Administration's energy plan contemplates U.S. transportation using 10% more energy in 1985 than it did in 1976? And that the projection for 1985 use is only 3% lower with the energy plan than without it? This is largely because the plan relies on lighter automobiles, but no reduction in their numbers, while rail transit is neglected.

To serve on a committee to study the energy crisis and transportation, contact NARP Director James F. Farny, 12 Squirrel Lane, Newark, DE 19711, or call him evenings at 302/366-8849.

straint? That the study will in fact be based upon an accurate and responsible analysis of this nation's transportation needs and potentials? We hope so. We trust that Secretary Adams' \$500 and \$111 million budget proposals were submitted before the recent House vote, and before he fully realized current sentiments in the House regarding Amtrak and the nation's intercity passenger train services.

" . . . The Conferees are of the opinion that a comprehensive reexamination of Amtrak's route structure from a zero base should be undertaken and hereby direct the Department of Transportation, in cooperation with Amtrak, to prepare and submit its recommendations for a route structure that will provide an optimal national railroad passenger system based upon current and future market and population requirements. Included as an integral part of such recommendations should be projections of operating and capital appropriations that will be required to support the system for fiscal years 1979 through 1982. The Conferees intend that this route structure analysis be submitted at the appropriate time for use in the authorization and appropriations processes during the Second Session of the 95th Congress, but not later than March 1, 1978. . . ."

Conference Report to H.R. 9375, the Supplemental Appropriations Bill for 1978

And when they had the forum in which to present these arguments, the result was very impressive.

NARP: Do we have any assurances now that the "Floridian" will be rerouted?

GORE: Yes. I have a personal assurance from the President of Amtrak, Paul Reistrup, that plans for implementing the rerouting are beginning immediately. In addition, the Board of Directors made it quite plain in their meeting before the Supplemental was ever approved that it should be rerouted through Chattanooga and Atlanta.

NARP: What input will Congress and the public have in the Department of Transportation route study?

GORE: Well we plan to monitor the study closely at every decision phase. However, I don't think we can expect definitive recommendations from their report. Rather I suspect that it will be an overall policy statement on where the Administration believes that rail passenger service should be headed in this country. Then the appropriate committees and subcommittees will hold hearings to examine this study and to fill in the details. And at that point the role of Congress will be much larger. The public will be involved at that point also. And when all the information is complete, then it will be up to the Congress to put it together — in the form of a nationwide plan to make rail service work in this country once again.

NARP: Do you think that the nation can expect any kind of Presidential recognition of the need for intercity passenger train service?

GORE: I hope so. I believe that President Carter certainly got a message from the Nov. 30 vote. The size of the vote was very impressive, and he knows that the support is there for a nationwide passenger rail service. I am working with members of his Administration to further convince them of the need to implement this idea, and I'm very optimistic about it.

The November 30 House Vote on Amtrak

It took three roll call votes on Nov. 30 to win Amtrak additional funds on the floor of the House of Representatives. Support for Amtrak on all three votes is indicated by three plus signs (+++) after a Representative's name. A vote opposing increased supplemental funds for Amtrak is indicated by a minus sign (-). A question mark (?) means that a legislator did not vote.

The pro-Amtrak vote (+++) was (1) a 'no' vote on the procedural matter of whether to demand an immediate vote on Rep. Conte's

motion to increase Amtrak's funds from \$8 to \$11.5 million; (2) a 'yes' vote on Rep. Gore's motion to amend Conte's motion from \$11.5 to \$18 million; and (3) a 'yes' vote on Conte's motion as amended by Gore.

Send a quick note to your Representative, making sure that he or she knows that you know how he or she voted. It is especially important to commend those who voted in support of Amtrak.

<u>Alabama</u>	<u>Florida</u>	3. Winn+--	<u>Missouri</u>	<u>North Carolina</u>	3. Derrick+--
1. Edwards+--	1. Sikes+++	4. Glickman+++	1. Clay+++	1. Jones+--	4. Mann+--
2. Dickinson+--	2. Fuqua+++	5. Skubitz+++	2. Young+++	2. Fountain+--	5. Holland+--
3. Nichols+--	3. Bennett+++	<u>Kentucky</u>	3. Gebhardt+++	3. Whitley+--	6. Jenrette+++
4. Beville+--	4. Chappell+++	1. Hubbard+++	4. Skelton+++	4. Andrews+--	<u>South Dakota</u>
5. Flippo+--	5. Kelly???	2. Natcher+++	5. Bolling???	5. Neal+--	1. Pressler+++
6. Buchanan+++	6. Young+++	3. Mazzoli+++	6. Coleman+++	6. Preyer+--	2. Abdor???
7. Flowers+--	7. Gibbons+--	4. Snyder+++	7. Taylor+--	7. Rose+--	<u>Tennessee</u>
<u>Alaska</u>	8. Ireland+++	5. Carter+--	8. Ichord+++	8. Hefner+--	1. Quillen+++
AL Young+--	9. Frey???	6. Breckinridge+++	9. Volkmer+--	9. Martin+--	2. Duncan+--
<u>Arizona</u>	10. Bafalis+--	7. Perkins+++	10. Burlison+--	10. Broyhill+--	3. Lloyd+++
1. Rhodes+--	11. Rogers+++	<u>Louisiana</u>	<u>Montana</u>	11. Gudger+--	4. Gore+++
2. Udall?++	12. Burke+++	1. Livingston+--	1. Baucus+++	<u>North Dakota</u>	5. Allen+++
3. Stump+--	13. Lehman+++	2. Boggs+--	2. Marlenee+++	AL Andrews+++	6. Beard+++
4. Rudd+--	14. Pepper+--	3. Treen+--	<u>Nebraska</u>	<u>Ohio</u>	7. Jones???
<u>Arkansas</u>	15. Fascell+++	4. Waggoner+--	1. Thovane???	1. Gradison+--	8. Ford+++
1. Alexander???	<u>Georgia</u>	5. Haggerty+--	2. Cavanaugh+++	2. Luken+--	<u>Texas</u>
2. Tucker???	1. Ginn+++	6. Moore+--	3. Smith???	3. Whalen???	1. Hall+--
3. Hammerschmidt???	2. Mathis+++	7. Breaux+--	<u>Nevada</u>	4. Guyer+++	2. Wilson???
4. Thornton???	3. Brinkley+++	8. Long+--	AL Santini+++	5. Latta+--	3. Collins+--
<u>California</u>	4. Levitas+++	<u>Maine</u>	<u>New Hampshire</u>	6. Harsha+++	4. Roberts+--
1. Johnson+--	5. Fowler+++	1. Emery+++	1. D'Amour+++	7. Brown+--	5. Mattox+++
2. Clausen+--	6. Flynt+--	2. Cohen+++	2. Cleland+++	8. Kindness+++	6. Teague+?
3. Moss???	7. McDonald???	<u>Maryland</u>	<u>New Jersey</u>	9. Ashley+--	7. Archer+--
4. Leggett+++	8. Evans+++	1. Bauman+++	1. Florio+--	10. Miller+--	8. Eckhardt?++
5. Burton, J.+--	9. Jenkins+--	2. Long?--	2. Hughes+--	11. Stanton+--	9. Brooks+++
6. Burton, P.+--	10. Barnard+++	3. Mikulski+++	3. Howard+++	12. Devine+--	10. Pickle+++
7. Miller+++	<u>Hawaii</u>	4. Holt+++	4. Thompson+--	13. Pease+++	11. Poage+--
8. Dellums???	1. Heftel+--	5. Spellman+++	5. Fenwick+--	14. Seiberling+++	12. Wright+++
9. Stark+++	2. Akaka+++	6. Byron+++	6. Forsythe+--	15. Wylie+++	13. Hightower+?
10. Edwards+++	<u>Idaho</u>	7. Mitchell+++	7. Maguire+++	16. Regula+++	14. Young+--
11. Ryan+++	1. Symms+--	8. Steers+++	8. Roet+++	17. Ashbrook+++	15. de la Garza+++
12. McCloskey+++	2. Hansen, G.+--	<u>Massachusetts</u>	9. Hollenbeck+?	18. Applegate+++	16. White???
13. Mineta+++	<u>Illinois</u>	1. Conte+--	10. Rodino+++	19. Carney+++	17. Burleson+--
14. McFall+--	1. Metcalfe+++	2. Boland+++	11. Minish+++	20. Oaker+++	18. Jordan+++
15. Sisk+++	2. Murphy+++	3. Early+++	12. Rinaldo+++	21. Stokes+++	19. Mahon+--
16. Panetta+--	3. Russo+++	4. Drinan+++	13. Meyner+++	22. Vanik+++	20. Gonzalez+++
17. Krebs+++	4. Derwinski+++	5. Tsongas+++	14. LeFante+++	23. Mottl+--	21. Krueger???
18. Ketchum+--	5. Fary+++	6. Harrington+++	15. Patten+--	<u>Oklahoma</u>	22. Gammage+--
19. Lagomarsino+--	6. Hyde+--	7. Markey+++	<u>New Mexico</u>	1. Jones+--	23. Kazen+++
20. Goldwater+--	7. Collins+++	8. O'Neill*	1. Lujan+++	2. Risenhoover+--	24. Milford+--
21. Corman+--	8. Rostenkowski+++	9. Moakley+++	2. Runnels+--	3. Watkins+--	<u>Utah</u>
22. Moorhead+--	9. Yates+--	10. Heckler+++	<u>New York</u>	4. Steed+--	1. McCarry+++
23. Beilenson+++	10. Mikva+++	11. Burke+++	1. Pike???	5. Edwards+--	<u>Vermont</u>
24. Waxman???	11. Annunzio+++	12. Studds+++	2. Downey+++	6. English+--	AL Jeffords+++
25. Roybal+--	12. Crane+--	<u>Michigan</u>	3. Ambro+--	<u>Oregon</u>	<u>Virginia</u>
26. Rousselot+--	13. McClory+++	1. Conyers???	4. Lent+--	1. AuCoin+++	1. Triple+--
27. Dornan+--	14. Erlenborn+--	2. Pursell+++	5. Wydler+--	2. Ullman+++	2. Whitehurst+--
28. Burke+++	15. Corcoran+--	3. Brown+--	6. Wolff+++	3. Duncan???	3. Satterfield+--
29. Hawkins+++	16. Anderson+--	4. Stockman+--	7. Addabbo+++	4. Weaver+++	4. Daniel, R.+--
30. Danielson+--	17. O'Brien+--	5. Sawyer+--	8. Rosenthal+++	<u>Pennsylvania</u>	5. Daniel, Dan+--
31. Wilson, C.+??	18. Mitchell+++	6. Carr+++	9. Delaney+++	1. Myers+++	6. Butler+--
32. Anderson+++	19. Railsback+?	7. Kildee+++	10. Biaggi+++	2. Nix+++	7. Robinson+--
33. Clawson+--	20. Findley+--	8. Traxler+++	11. Scheuer+++	3. Lederer+++	8. Harris+?
34. Hannaford+++	21. Madigan+--	9. Vander Jagt+--	12. Chisholm???	4. Eilberg+++	9. Wampler+--
35. Lloyd+++	22. Shipley+++	10. Cederberg+--	13. Solarz+++	5. Schulze+++	10. Fisher+--
36. Brown+--	23. Price+++	11. Ruppe???	14. Richmond+++	6. Yatron+++	<u>Washington</u>
37. Pettis+--	24. Simon+++	12. Bonior+++	15. Zeffertti+++	7. Edgar+++	1. Pritchard+++
38. Patterson+--	<u>Indiana</u>	13. Diggs???	16. Holtzman+++	8. Kostmayer+++	2. Meeds+?
39. Wiggins+--	1. Benjamin+++	14. Nedzi+++	17. Murphy?+	9. Shuster+++	3. Bonker+++
40. Badham+--	2. Fithian???	15. Ford+++	18. Koch+++	10. McDade+--	4. McCormack+++
41. Wilson, B.+--	3. Brademas+++	16. Fordell+++	19. Rangel+++	11. Flood+++	5. Foley+++
42. Van Deerlin???	4. Quayle+--	17. Brodhead+++	20. Weiss+++	12. Murtha+++	6. Dicks+--
43. Burgenert+--	5. Hillis+--	18. Blanchard+++	21. Badillo+++	13. Coughlin+--	7. Cunningham???
<u>Colorado</u>	6. Evans+++	19. Broomfield???	22. Bingham+?	14. Moorhead+--	<u>West Virginia</u>
1. Schroeder+++	7. Myers???	<u>Minnesota</u>	23. Caputo+++	15. Rooney+--	1. Mollohan+--
2. Wirth+++	8. Cornwell+++	1. Qule+++	24. Ottlinger+++	16. Walker+++	2. Stagers+++
3. Evans+--	9. Hamilton+++	2. Hagedorn+--	25. Fish+++	17. Ertel+++	3. Slack+--
4. Johnson+--	10. Sharp+++	3. Frenzel+--	26. Gilman+++	18. Walgren+++	4. Rahall+++
5. Armstrong???	11. Jacobs+++	4. Vento+++	27. McHugh+--	19. Goodling, W.+??	<u>Wisconsin</u>
<u>Connecticut</u>	<u>Iowa</u>	5. Fraser+++	28. Stratton+++	20. Gaydos+++	1. Aspin+++
1. Catter+++	1. Leach+++	6. Nolan+++	29. Pattison+--	21. Dent???	2. Kastenmeier+++
2. Dodd+++	2. Blouin+++	7. Stangeland+--	30. McEwen+++	22. Murphy+++	3. Baldus+++
3. Giaimo+++	3. Grassley+--	8. Oberstar+++	31. Mitchell+++	23. Ammerman+--	4. Zablocki+++
4. McKinney+++	4. Smith+--	<u>Mississippi</u>	32. Hanley+++	24. Marks+++	5. Reuss+?
5. Sarasin???	5. Harkin+++	1. Whitten+--	33. Walsh+++	25. Myers+++	6. Steiger+++
6. Moffett+++	6. Bedell+--	2. Bowen+--	34. Horton+?	<u>Rhode Island</u>	7. Obey+--
<u>Delaware</u>	<u>Kansas</u>	3. Montgomery+--	35. Conable+--	1. St Germain+++	8. Cornell+--
AL Evans+++	1. Sebelius+--	4. Cochrane+--	36. LaFalce+--	2. Beard+++	9. Kasten???
	2. Keys+++	5. Lott+--	37. Nowak+++	<u>South Carolina</u>	<u>Wyoming</u>
			38. Kemp+--	1. Davis+++	AL Rencalio+++
			39. Lundine???	2. Spence+--	

*The Speaker (Rep. O'Neill of Mass.) ordinarily does not vote.

More Amtrak Funds (cont'd. from p. 1)

the Federal Energy Administration; \$383 million for strategic petroleum reserves; \$124 million for aid to refugees from Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos; \$80 million for the Clinch River breeder reactor; etc. The Chairman did not call attention to the controversial \$8 million for Amtrak.

Mr. Mahon yielded the floor to Rep. Al Cederberg (R-Mich.), ranking Republican on the full Committee, who in turn yielded to Rep. Silvio Conte, ranking Republican on the Transportation Subcommittee. Mr. Conte rose and announced that he intended at the appropriate time to offer a motion to reject the Appropriations bill, so that \$3.5 million could be added for Amtrak, bringing the House's recommendation for Amtrak up to \$11.5 million. Mr. Conte told the House that he would offer his motion "...to restore order where chaos exists, ...to insure that decisions with respect to Amtrak's operations proceed in logical fashion and are not made under the gun of financial desperation."

Mr. Conte's motion calling for rejection of the Conference Report did not come as a surprise to those involved with the Amtrak fight — but the dollar figure attached did. The original plan had been for Conte to offer a motion on the floor asking for

The election of the NARP director from Region XI (Arizona, New Mexico, El Paso) will be at a meeting of the Rail Passenger Association of the Southwest, Sat., Jan. 21, 10 AM, at the Quality Inn West in Phoenix at Thomas Rd. and the Black Canyon Freeway, not in March as indicated in the last newsletter. (A first-class mailing of this correction was to be sent to all NARP members in the region.) RPAS does plan to hold another meeting in March or April.

the full \$18 million. In response to a question from Rep. Bill Young (R-Fla.) about the impact of his motion on trains threatened with discontinuance, Conte indicated that it would not be enough to restore all trains, that he would have preferred to have asked for \$18 million, but that Mr. Cederberg had agreed to let him offer his motion only under the condition that he not ask for more than \$11.5 million. "Under the rules of the House, [Mr. Cederberg] has the authority as the ranking minority member," Mr. Conte said. "Government is the art of compromise," he reminded his Florida colleague.

Conte was willing to take this compromise step because he recognized that he was, as ranking subcommittee member, perhaps the only House member that the Appropriations leadership would recognize for the purpose of amending the Amtrak sums. As it was, Conte was only allowed to make his motion on the condition that he vote with the Committee on the first vote.

Reps. Ron Marlenee (R-Mont.), Max Baucus (D-Mont.), and Bruce Vento (D-Minn.) each rose and offered speeches in support of Amtrak, arguing that the Appropriations Bill should be sent back to Conference.

Rep. Al Gore (D-Tenn.) then rose and announced that, if permitted, he intended to offer an amendment to Mr. Conte's motion, increasing Amtrak's funding from \$8 million to the full \$18 million level. Gore told the House: "To require Amtrak to eliminate as many as six major long-haul routes would effectively dismantle our national network. . ."

Three more House members offered speeches in support of Mr. Gore's proposal — Reps. Richard Gephardt (D-Mo.), Charles Bennett (D-Fla.), and Alvin Baldus (D-Wis.).

Mr. Mahon then called for a vote to accept the Conference Report as submitted by the Conferees. Mr. Conte immediately offered his motion to recommit the bill with an amendment increasing Amtrak's funds to \$11.5 million.

Members on the House floor knew that Rep. Gore wanted to request a further increase. But parliamentary rules are such that the Tennessee Congressman could not simply stand up and offer an amendment to Rep. Conte's motion. House members could have insisted that a vote be taken on Conte's motion by itself, without allowing the opportunity for any amending of that motion. The Speaker asked if the House wanted to vote on Conte's motion immediately — i.e., without first considering the

amendment that Gore intended to offer.

On the voice vote the House appeared divided, and Mr. Gore demanded a roll call vote. The House voted 270 nays, 125 yeas, 39 not voting — thereby rejecting the call for a vote on Conte's motion until the House had an opportunity first to vote on Gore's proposal.

As soon as the vote was announced, Rep. Gore offered his amendment to increase Conte's \$11.5 million to \$18 million. In order to give Mr. Gore an opportunity to restate his case on the floor, Conte asked him what his amendment was intended to accomplish. In response to Gore's assertion that the amendment would keep all current Amtrak routes in operation until the DOT study is made available on March 1, Rep. Conte repeated his endorsement of the full \$18 million: **"...I said on the floor of the House during the debate I strongly support the \$18 million, and I strongly supported it in conference, and I strongly support it here."**

Committee Chairman Mahon rose to argue against sending the Appropriations Bill back to Conference. Ranking member Cederberg rose to argue against "caving in" to the Senate's

"The future of rail passenger service is seriously threatened by the supplemental appropriations bill conference report. . .

"We strongly urge you to insist on. . .the Senate amendment appropriating \$18 million for Amtrak."

—NARP's Orren Beaty, in a Nov. 29 letter to all House members

demands for Amtrak funds. Subcommittee Chairman McFall rose and argued against the need for adding any more than the \$8 million already provided for Amtrak.

A head-on confrontation over the Amtrak issue was at hand. Evidently fearing that the Amtrak supporters would lose in their bid to overturn the Appropriations leadership, Rep. Jake Pickle (D-Tex.) asked the Speaker if it would be in order for him to offer a substitute amendment as a compromise that both parties might accept.

The Speaker's response: "Not unless the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. Gore) yields for that purpose." Mr. Pickle: "Mr. Speaker, then I ask the gentleman from Tennessee, would he yield for a substitute amendment to be offered?"

Mr. Pickle's question was greeted with a chorus of "No's!" from across the floor of the House. Silence followed, as the House waited to see what the Tennessee Congressman would do. Mr. Gore stood with his head bowed, leaning his weight on both hands on the table in front of him. It was up to him to decide — should he insist on a vote for the full \$18 million and risk losing additional funds for Amtrak — or should he yield to a softer, compromise measure that would save some routes, but continue to require the discontinuance of others?

After several moments, the freshman Congressman lifted his head and spoke very slowly, punctuating each individual word: "Mr. Speaker, believing as I do that the basic issue is whether we are to have a rail passenger system in this country, I would prefer to have the vote on whether we are going to continue the present lines or whether we are going to cancel the rail service all over the country."

Applause followed, an expression not only of support for Amtrak, but of respect for Gore's decision as well. The roll call was ordered. Should the House accept Gore's motion to amend Conte's motion, increasing Amtrak funds to \$18 million? The initial votes showed 2 to 1 in favor of adding the Amtrak funds, and as the remaining votes came in (House members have 15 minutes to record their vote) it became clear that support for the motion was more than adequate to ensure its passage. The final result — yeas 256, nays 141, not voting 37.

After Gore's amendment passed, a final vote was called on whether now to accept the Conte motion as amended by the preceding vote. The result — yeas 258, nays 138, not voting 38.

The conference committee revised the bill in line with the House's instructions, and the House passed it on Dec. 6. Controversy over the B-1 bomber, also in the bill, prevented Senate action in December, but the Senate is expected to take up the bill again soon after Congress reconvenes Jan. 17.