



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

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RETURN REQUESTED

WELCOME BACK, CARDINAL!

Providence Rail Advocates Try to Save Federal Dollars

The Rhode Island Association of Railroad Passengers has gone to court in an effort to block the use of federal funds to relocate Amtrak's mainline through Providence away from the existing downtown station to an isolated area where a new station would be built. (NARP News, Aug. & Oct., 1980) NARP and Ecology Action For Rhode Island have joined as plaintiffs.

Rail advocates had hoped that Secretary Lewis, taking note of the rapidly escalating cost estimates for rail relocation and the project's lack of general popularity, would see elimination of this project as an obvious opportunity to reduce demand on the federal treasury.

The May, 1981, Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
(continued on page 2)

TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

The "Cardinal" to resume as a tri-weekly train Jan. 8; the "Empire Builder" to operate daily year-round (see lead story).

Oregon's 403(b) Portland-Eugene "Willamette Valley" trains were to make their final runs Dec. 31. State officials hope to reinstate service eventually, possibly with self-propelled cars.

30 minutes was to be cut from the Washington-Chicago "Capitol Ltd." schedule, effective Jan. 8: it departs Washington 3:55 PM west and arrives Washington 2:40 PM east. No change west of Pittsburgh. Also, the westbound "Ft. Pitt" runs one hour earlier Mon.-Sat., departing Altoona 6 AM.

Carbondale, IL, was to gain a new downtown intermodal station in late Dec. The \$2 million facility for Amtrak trains and intercity buses was necessitated by a major grade crossing elimination project, and was funded by the Federal Highway Admin., Illinois Central Gulf RR, Illinois DOT, City of Carbondale, and Southern Illinois University.

Jan. 10 through Apr. 1, Amtrak will offer special discount round-trip fares, equal to the one-way price plus \$10, on most of its eastern long-distance trains. To qualify for the discount, the one-way fare must be \$45 or more, and all travel must be completed by April 1. Good in sleepers upon payment of room charge. Savings of up to 55% possible.

Jan. 15 through Apr. 24, Amtrak will offer an expanded Western Circle fare for travel on all transcontinental trains with stop-overs permitted. Chicago-West Coast circle fares will be \$350/two weeks, \$440/30 days; East Coast-West Coast circle fares (Florida routes excluded) will be \$430/two weeks, \$520/30 days.

And Builder Goes Daily, Plus Good News for Sacramento and Washington

On Jan. 8, Amtrak's "Cardinal" resumes operation, this time tri-weekly (departing endpoints Sunday/Wednesday/Friday) and with a through sleeper as well as coach to/from New York. The train links Washington and Chicago via Charlottesville, VA; Charleston, WV; Ashland, KY; Cincinnati; and Muncie, IN. The train also provides important Chicago-Northeast linkages: the only through service for Baltimore and Wilmington; westward departure from Washington about five hours later than the "Capitol Ltd." while still connecting in Chicago with the "SF Zephyr/Pioneer/Desert Wind"; eastward Washington arrival over six hours earlier than the "Cap"; and a smaller but significant "east end advantage" in Philadelphia which will improve Feb. 7. Many "Cardinal" riders will benefit when, in conjunction with Feb. 7 NEC speedups, the westward departure from New York will be one hour later, 5 PM, and the eastward arrival 30 minutes earlier, 12:07 PM, but "Cardinal" times west of Washington will not change.

Other good news:

- The Chicago-Seattle/Portland "Empire Builder" is now daily year-round. It didn't revert to tri-weekly after Jan. 4-5;

- Starting in late April, Amtrak hopes to reroute its LA-Seattle "Coast Starlight" via Sacramento and Chico, the latter station replacing the current Orland stop, as the result of a Dec. 14 arbitration panel ruling that this can be done without any capital expenditure; and

NARP Regional Meetings in Brief: Jan. 30: Albuquerque; Feb. 6: New Haven, CT; Feb. 27: Sacramento; Mar. 6: Bethlehem, PA, and (tentative) Albany, NY; Mar. 13: Milwaukee (1:30 PM); Mar. 20: Toledo, OH, and Portland, OR; Apr. 2-4: St Louis; Apr. 3: Baltimore; Apr. 3-4: Orlando. Region 11 (AZ/NM/El Paso) will meet in the Albuquerque Convention Center at 1:30 PM Jan. 30. Ballots for director should reach Jon Messier, 416 Columbia Drive SE, Albuquerque, NM 87106 by then. Candidates: Robert Bertram, 1400 Cardenas SE #19, Albuquerque 87108; Robert H. Bohannon, PO Box 29038, Phoenix, AZ 85038. (Vote for one; include your name/address.) Details on other meetings next issue.

- Convenient passenger access to all trains at Washington Union Station is one goal of a new law (see separate article).

Revival of the "Cardinal," which had ceased operation Oct. 1, resulted from the President's Dec. 15th signing of Fiscal Year 1982's third continuing resolution, funding various programs through Mar. 31. The regular DOT appropriations conference report, approved by the House and Senate on Dec. 14, was in-

(continued on page 4)

Providence (continued from page 1)

prepared by the Federal Railroad Administration turned out to be another attempt to justify what NARP believes is a massive public subsidy for benefit of the Providence & Worcester Railroad, whose land will drastically appreciate in value if the rails are relocated.

In a July 1 letter to Secretary Lewis, NARP's Ross Capon wrote: "In light of your commitment to reducing the federal budget, and of cutbacks in beneficial aspects of the Northeast Corridor Improvement Project (NECIP), we are appalled that DOT under your administration continues, with this Final EIS, the Carter tradition of 'paving the way' (literally!) for a costly project that will draw in part from NECIP funds yet provide only disbenefits to the intercity rail passenger."

Observe how the estimated cost to the federal government sharply increased from the June, 1980, Draft EIS to the May, 1981, Final EIS:

ALTERNATIVE	6/80 ESTIMATE	5/81 ESTIMATE
B (NECIP rail work only)	\$14.2 million	\$19.2 million
C (B + highway interchange)	\$28.3 million	\$46.4 million
D (Rail relocation; major new roads)	\$47.1 million	\$73.9 million

Note that the inflation rate for the rail-only project, was much lower than for the two alternatives with major highway work (35% vs. 64% and 57%).

The July 23 reply came from Federal RR Administrator Robert W. Blanchette. He in effect thanked NARP for raising issues which led to preparation of a more complete Final EIS, but he totally ignored the fundamental issue: the expenditure of excessive amounts of public funds on a project that will reduce, not increase, Amtrak's revenues.

NARP also alerted the President's Office of Management and Budget about our support for a less costly alternative, without apparent results.

FRA told NARP that, as of Nov. 1, just under three years' effort and slightly more than \$1.6 million had been spent on relocation, including \$312,450 committed to "mitigation" costs (archaeological digs and documentation of historic structures, including the railroad bridges that would eventually be taken down) and \$350,000 (partly Federal Highway Administration funds) on EIS work. However, about \$2 million (not \$6 million as stated in the Aug. 1980 NARP News) has been spent on upgrading the railroad bridges which would be removed from service with relocation. Some of the work was essential to permit Amtrak to continue operating in recent years.

FRA foresees the possibility that drawings for relocation will be completed next summer and that groundbreaking will be early in 1983.

Meanwhile, in the court case filed in early August in U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island, RIARP *et al* have argued primarily that using NECIP funds for rail relocation and the new station would be inconsistent with Congressionally mandated NECIP goals. Congress wanted the money spent on projects that would increase rail ridership; RIARP and NARP believe that track and station facility relocation would reduce ridership potential.

In a June 26 letter to NARP Vice-President Samuel E. Stokes, Jr., Rep. Claudine Schneider (R-RI) wrote: "I, too, share many of your reservations with the effect the project will have on mass transportation systems in the city."

Even DOT, in answering RIARP's allegations, stated: "Defendant admits the EIS indicated there would be a negative impact on railroad passengers walking from the bus lines." DOT also admitted that rail relocation would provide no speed increase since all trains would stop at the station.

An Urban Land Institute study was critical of the east-west boulevard, noting that, "in the present plan (Union Station) is virtually surrounded by roads; it loses its importance in the overall plan by being cut off from both the downtown and the remainder of Capital Center." (There is, so far, no consensus on what use should be made of the building once the tracks have been moved.) Some members of the Capitol Center Commission, which is to coordinate relocation-related development, meeting

on Dec. 10 appeared unfamiliar with the ULI criticism.

The most recent legal development is that the State of Rhode Island moved for dismissal of RIARP's suit. Even if the case is dismissed, questions remain about that portion of project funding which must come from state and city.

On Nov. 3, state voters defeated 43,393-29,004 a bond issue which the state DOT had touted as necessary in order to construct the Civic Center interchange (which is intended to occupy the land where the tracks are now located). The bond issue carried in the City of Providence by only 617 votes even though the issue was strongly supported by the Democratic Party whose stronghold is in that city. (The only other communities voting in favor were Central Falls, where the bond issue won by 57 votes with 52% of the vote and Westerly, where the margin was 156 votes and the bond issue was supported by 58%. The bond issue also was favored by mail ballots 581-331.)

The Nov. 4 Providence *Evening Bulletin* quoted Gov. J. Joseph Garrahy (D) as saying that the Civic Center interchange was "set back . . . Everybody will have to take a new look at relocating the railroad tracks, as to whether that's financially viable for us to participate in, at least in the time frame that had been expected."

The *Bulletin's* own front-page news analysis said: "It is also obvious that voters did not buy the argument that the transportation spending would actually boost the economy by keeping road builders at work and by enhancing places such as downtown Providence with a new Civic Center interchange. . ."

Federal officials believe the Governor will make the necessary changes in state budget priorities to complete the interchange, and claim the state's contribution to rail relocation is fully committed.

NEEDED: SIGNAGE FOR STATIONS

If your city has an Amtrak station, does it also have directional signs posted on city streets, indicating where the station is located? If not, please contact your city officials (e.g. mayor, city manager, or council members) and request that such signs be erected. Directional signs are inexpensive, and are useful not only in improving motorists' access to stations, but in increasing Amtrak's visibility in your community.

While you're at it, you might work to get similar signs posted at appropriate Interstate highway exits. State transportation officials have jurisdiction over Interstate signage.

In many instances, city and state officials have agreed to install such signs at the request of NARP members.

RIARP members are hopeful the Governor's comment above is accurate, and that the rail relocation groundbreaking will never take place, called off by the Governor—if not the courts—as a result of the mounting financial problems facing the state. They note the state and city face severe budgetary crises; 25% of senior citizen transportation was just cut from the state budget along with \$1.3 million from higher education which will mean higher student tuition. The Governor, they believe, is going to be forced quickly to choose between new taxes or major budget cuts. . . and they hope the rail relocation project will be on the cut list.

The problem is that the state's contribution to rail relocation itself, as distinct from the Civic Center Interchange, is relatively small, so one hopes the Governor will observe closely the ongoing prospects for development around the new station.

Public arguments for rail relocation have centered on the kind of development the area will have (*NARP News*, Aug. 1980, p. 3). The station is expected to be "isolated" only for a few years, soon to have big office buildings as nearby neighbors. But the possibility that the station would be isolated indefinitely might lead the Governor to think twice.

Rail relocation clearly will hurt the existing downtown by depriving it of proximity to rail service, Providence being a moderate sized city not overwhelmed by great air service and only 3:34 from New York City by today's fastest train. If the development rail relocation is supposed to stimulate becomes doubtful, benefits of the project become virtually impossible to identify. ■

LET'S RERAIL OKLAHOMA!

Rep. Mickey Edwards (R-OK) hosted a Nov. 16 meeting in his Washington office aimed at restoring Amtrak service to Oklahoma. Also present were Amtrak President Alan S. Boyd, NARP Director Ronald W. Coffman from Oklahoma City, along with NARP's Capon and Williams, newspaper reporters, and staff representatives from the Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce, the Oklahoma DOT, and the offices of every Oklahoma representative and senator (except House Budget Chairman James R. Jones, who personally telephoned during the meeting and talked with Boyd), and of Sen. Nancy Landon Kassebaum (R-KS).

At Edwards' request, Coffman presented a plan that Amtrak operate a Newton, KS-Dallas section of the "Southwest Ltd." Thus the cars would operate Chicago-Kansas City-Newton-Wichita-Oklahoma City-Ft. Worth-Dallas.

Boyd said he had no money and did not foresee getting any, but he did not find fault with the proposal, did agree to take a good, hard look at the proposal, and must have been impressed with the Oklahoma delegation's turnout and the respect which Edwards showed for Coffman and the Oklahoma Passenger Rail Association.

To help get Oklahoma service in FY '83, which begins in less than a year, now is the time to have legislators pin down Amtrak on what its FY '83 budget requirements would be for such service, and to get legislators to work to see that Amtrak gets the funding. If your rep is a Republican, ask him/her to tell House Republican Leader Robert H. Michel (IL) this is important; if a Democrat, to get the word to Rep. Jones.

New Chicago Maintenance Base



—Photo by John H. Kuehl

Amtrak's new Chicago Maintenance Facility, looking north from 6-story control tower. Chicago River at right.

On Sep. 26, Amtrak dedicated its new \$44 million Chicago Maintenance Facility, located immediately south of Chicago Union Station. The 48-acre facility consists of a car repair shop, diesel shop, wheel-truing shop, car washer building, commissary/warehouse, maintenance-of-way building, pollution-control building, fuel storage system, and 13 miles of service and storage tracks.

The new facility, with hundreds of thousands of square feet of indoor space, replaces five separate, antiquated servicing yards where much work had to be performed outdoors—a torturous task in Chicago's bitter winter weather. Construction of the facility began in 1977, precipitated in large part by the catastrophic winter of 1976-77, in which record cold temperatures combined with ice and snow to paralyze Amtrak's Chicago operations, forcing the suspension of train service over eight routes for from 13 to 43 days.

The Chicago Maintenance Facility repairs, cleans, stocks, and dispatches the approximately 55 intercity passenger trains which serve the city daily. It is expected to save \$4 million annually. ■

Iowa NARP Members Help Save Some of the Rock's Tracks

A bill providing for state acquisition of segments of the defunct Rock Island Lines in Iowa was one of three items scheduled for action by a special session of the state legislature called for June.

"From the middle of May until the June session," according to NARP Director Catherine Johnson of Iowa City, "Iowa NARP members pulled out all the stops. Letter writing campaign, contributions of money, and help in distributing 2,000 leaflets explaining the legislation—a rally at the end of a day legislative inspection trip on the RI tracks in a special rail/truck vehicle in Iowa City with lots of media coverage and an \$800 ad in the *Des Moines Sunday Register* before the vote paid for by one of our members."

The special session focussed almost exclusively on other matters, but the House did pass the rail bill 74-22 on the last day of the session after Iowa DOT Planning Director Ian McGillivray warned members that the RI trustee would probably go ahead with liquidation in the absence of a positive vote.

There followed adjournment until a second special session Aug. 12. According to Johnson, "at this time the Senate was not thought to have the votes for passage so we needed the interim to turn it around. 15,000 more flyers were printed which were sent to our members represented by 'negative votes.' These people were asked to do everything they could and they did. WE WON by 6 votes. We had several letters from senators to our members saying that they had been convinced by the NARP member's contact."

RAIL TRANSIT EXPANSIONS

On Dec. 4, Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) opened the first phase of its north-south rail transit line, a 2-mile (all subway) downtown segment, which connects with the two-year-old, 12-mile east-west line at Five Points Station. MARTA's goal is a 53-mile heavy rail system, which according to present plans will not interface directly with Amtrak.

On Dec. 5, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) added 2.5 miles (all subway) to its 37-mile heavy rail transit system, by extending its Red Line northward from Dupont Circle to Van Ness St., NW. WMATA, or "Metro," presently interfaces with Amtrak at Washington Union Station, and will interface at Alexandria, VA (1982?) and Rockville (1983?) and New Carrollton, MD (1984?). (Silver Spring stations are within walking distance.)

The lead editorial in the Aug. 23rd *Sunday Register* began, "The railroad preservation plan enacted last week may well be the one action for which the 1981 Legislature will be remembered 10 years from now, as House Majority Leader Lawrence Pope has suggested."

The state can sell up to \$200 million in bonds, and guarantee them by placing an 8¢/gallon tax on locomotive fuel. The railroads to be taxed are suing the state, although the state's Attorney General told the legislature its position was sound. Iowa DOT notes that Iowa ranks 3rd lowest in terms of per mile railroad taxes and would remain below average when the new tax is implemented.

The state DOT is meeting with shippers to determine which lines should be saved. Only lines that are economically viable while unable to meet high corporate rate-of-return standards will be retained. From the standpoint of passenger potential, NARP naturally hopes that the Davenport-Des Moines-Omaha segment will be saved.

Assuming C&NW submits a written contract to upgrade the Minneapolis-Des Moines-(Kansas City) line, the other route of long-term interest to NARP (map, Nov. '78 NARP News), the state could not bid for that line under the law, which was fashioned to minimize adverse state impact on private enterprise.

Under the law, the state would not operate lines it acquires but make loans to railroad companies to buy or fix track.

Congratulations, NARP members, for a job well done! ■

Washington Union Station: A Big Step Forward

For the first time since Union Station was ruined as a rail passenger terminal, the House, Senate, and Secretary of Transportation have agreed on and supported the same piece of legislation, S. 1192, the Union Station Redevelopment Act of 1981. House approval came Dec. 16 and the President signed the bill into law Dec. 29.

It directs the Secretary to "provide for the rehabilitation and redevelopment of the Union Station complex primarily as a multiple-use transportation terminal . . . and secondarily as a commercial complex, in accordance with the following goals . . . (b) Restoration and operation of a portion of the historic Union Station building as a rail passenger station, together with holding facilities for charter, transit, and intercity buses in the Union Station complex. . . ."

In a move that will further enhance the area, Greyhound is already preparing to develop a complex just north of Union Station. Its own bus terminal is to be relocated there from a relatively unattractive site near the present Trailways terminal a mile away. Trailways may soon announce plans to build its new terminal adjacent to the new Greyhound one.

The Secretary "shall, on an emergency basis, carry out an engineering survey of all existing structures at the Union Station complex for the following purposes . . . (2) in cooperation with Amtrak, to determine those actions necessary or desirable to restore rail passenger handling functions to the historic Union Station building and otherwise improve rail passenger service facilities at Union Station, including improved passenger access to the trains. . . ."

FOR YOUR COLLECTION . . .

Ohio's 1982 calendar, 9"x12" single page with color photo of "Lake Shore Ltd." and "Lake Cities" in Toledo. Send \$1 to Ohio ARP, PO Box 653, Xenia 45385. . . Amtrak's 1982 calendar, 24"x33" single page with Gil Reid's painting of the new Chicago maintenance facility, "SF Zephyr" and "Broadway" passing by, Sears Tower in the background. Send \$5 (\$9 for 2; \$12 for 3) to Amtrak Calender, PO Box 311, Addison, IL 60101. . . Bumper sticker, "Amtrak Fuel Efficient Transportation for the 80's." Send \$1.25 to Interrail, PO Box 20443, Salt Lake City, UT 84120.

AFTER-HOURS HOT LINE (202/546-1551)

On weekdays, please call after 6:00 PM ET. It's frequently not possible to complete the tape by 5:30, and difficult to do when calls from hopeful listeners are coming in. Thanks!

In cooperation with Amtrak, the Secretary is to "carry out a planning and market feasibility study to assess the commercial development potential of the Union Station complex." The engineering survey is due six months after enactment; the feasibility study is due one year after enactment.

The bill formally eliminates the National Visitor Center, which had been operated by the Department of Interior until the building was closed entirely after it flooded last February due to massive roof leaks. The only new money authorized in the bill is up to \$275,000/year for six years with which the Secretary would buy out a lease and obtain ownership from the railroad-controlled Washington Terminal Company.

\$40 million of the District of Columbia's share of interstate highway funds are authorized for completion of an above-the-tracks parking garage that has stood unfinished and, except for the bottom level used by local buses, unused since 1976. This represents a welcome change in position by the Secretary.

\$8 million previously authorized is to be used to "complete the installation of new roofs and associated drainage systems on all existing roof surfaces" within twelve months of enactment.

Beyond that, the bill provides a framework within which problems at Union Station could be completely solved, assuming the parties involved can agree. The bill, for example, does not specifically mandate returning upper-level tracks across the site of the

present "Amshack" to the old concourse, but NARP and others see this as the logical result of the bill's provisions and hope the studies will support this view. Up to \$29 million in Northeast Corridor Improvement Project funds can be used on the project. Either the House or Senate Commerce Committee, by majority vote, could veto use of any NECP funds over that threshold. ■

Welcome Back, Cardinal! (continued from page 1)
incorporated by reference into the continuing resolution, and included this language: "Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the corporation (Amtrak) shall provide rail passenger service between Washington, DC, and Chicago via Cincinnati."

The language had been inserted at the request of Senate Minority Leader Robert C. Byrd (WV), who worked hard to keep it in. (Oct.-Nov. News, p. 4. No third roll call materialized.) Other legislators along the route, and the Appropriations Subcommittee Chairmen, Rep. Adam Benjamin, Jr. (D-IN) and Sen. Mark Andrews (R-ND), also helped make "Cardinal's" restoration possible.

The President signed the regular FY '82 DOT appropriations bill into law on Dec. 23 (Public Law 97-102).

If "Cardinal" is to survive beyond then, assuming Amtrak's funding is adequate, ridership in early 1982 will have to be strong enough to enable Amtrak to project a FY '83 average of 150 passenger-miles-per-trainmile, or another special "Cardinal" provision will have to be adopted, no doubt against difficult odds.

Amtrak projects the tri-weekly "Cardinal" will average 128 PMTM in FY '82 (daily operation was projected at 122; the train is projected to meet the avoidable-loss-per-passenger-mile criterion either way: 9.5¢, vs. 9.0¢ daily and a FY '82 legal limit of 10.1¢). Amtrak's PMTM projection represents roughly a 20% improvement over FY '81. If the train beats Amtrak's projection, and the new Hammond, IN, station (serving Gary) is ready to open early in FY '83, Amtrak should be able to forecast 150 for that year.

To help ridership along, a five-state coalition of groups committed to keeping the Cardinal running was to meet in Cincinnati Jan. 9 to work on a private campaign to boost ridership. That is according to NARP Director Don Maxwell, of Ashland, KY, quoted in the lead story of the Dec. 12 Huntington (WV) *Herald-Dispatch*, one of an impressive parade of lead stories about the "Cardinal" in daily newspapers over the past several months.

Amtrak itself is expected to do an above-average job of promoting the service. The House/Senate conferees included the following language in their report accompanying the FY '82 DOT appropriations bill: "The conferees are encouraged by the improved ridership on the Cardinal in the past year and believe that further improvement is clearly possible. Amtrak is directed to improve local advertising and reservation service along the route of the Cardinal. Also, the conferees expect Amtrak to report before April 1, 1982, to the House and Senate committees on appropriations on the feasibility of increasing ridership on the Cardinal through route changes, fare restructuring and service improvements. In particular, this report should comment on the practicality of routing the Cardinal through Indianapolis, Indiana."

Amtrak is actively exploring the possibility of getting back into Cincinnati Union Terminal, which its developer reportedly would allow on favorable terms. Not only is this a more attractive location, with functioning retail stores in the building, but it would eliminate the time-consuming backup move required to reach Amtrak's River Road Station, permitting earlier Chicago arrival and later Chicago departure.

As for Amtrak overall, the new legislation preserves the funding of \$735 million, gives management freedom to spend money on operations, capital, etc. as it feels appropriate, and exempts Amtrak from payment of all state and local taxes except those paid to Beech Grove, IN, site of Amtrak's huge maintenance facility. This latter provision represents approximately an \$8 million improvement, from Amtrak's point of view, over what was contained in the authorization/reconciliation law signed Aug. 13. For all of this, again, we are especially appreciative of the work of Senator Andrews and Rep. Benjamin. ■