



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

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John R. Martin, Pres.; Eugene Skoropowski, V. Pres.; Robert Glover, Sec.; Joseph Horning, Jr., Treas.; Ross Capon, Exec. Dir.; Scott Leonard, Asst. Dir.; Jane Colgrove, Membership Dir.; Harriet Parcels, Transp. Assoc.

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RETURN REQUESTED

Clean Air Omission

The Overhaul of New York's Penn Station

Amtrak's most heavily used station is being transformed from a jampacked summer-oven/winter-freezer to a spacious waiting area (1,000 seats instead of 400) with effective heating and air-conditioning. New ticket windows opened along the west wall in 1987; then the old ticket and information windows were ripped out of the middle of what is now a huge waiting room.

The original Penn Station, the temple of rail transportation razed in 1963-66, can never be duplicated, but travellers will find the new improvements welcome. Moreover, there is a remarkable similarity in pedestrian traffic flow between the original Penn Station and the new arrangement. Most pedestrians have always come down from 7th Avenue. With the 1960s ticket-windows gone, however, passengers again can pass in a straight line through a shopping arcade, the waiting

OPERATIONS IMPROVEMENTS: THE JOINT VENTURE

Amtrak and Long Island Rail Road will build a train control center at 9th Av. and 31st St. (street level, south of the tracks where they are exposed in the cut west of Penn Sta.), part of a \$110 mill. project to open in about 6 years, control tracks from west of the Hudson River to where Amtrak joins Metro-North's New Haven and Hudson Lines (New Rochelle, Spuyten Duyvil, respectively), and make smoother dispatching technically feasible. Also, to encourage equitable treatment of all trains, supervisory control of Penn Sta.—Harold will shift every 6 mos. between Amtrak/LIRR. (Now, Amtrak always controls the sta.; LIRR always controls Harold, the Amtrak/LIRR jct. in Queens.)

area, and into the gate area.

Whereas the original ticket windows flanked that "straight-line" before one reached the waiting area, today's ticket windows are beyond the gate area, on the 8th Avenue side. This means a bit more walking for those who purchase tickets just before boarding, but it also means no more interference between ticket lines and those heading straight for the trains

(continued on page 2)

Bush Clean Air Plan Ignores Transit

"We've got to get people out of their one-passenger automobiles, put serious money into rail transit, and give up on the notion that if we just build the next road we'll solve our air pollution and congestion."

—Douglas Foy, Conservation Law Foundation (Boston),
quoted in *Boston Globe* news story June 23

"Reauthorization of the Clean Air Act . . . has the great potential to move transit into the forefront of transportation decision-making. A wider use of transit is envisioned in virtually every clean air attainment plan, giving you the opportunity to fulfill transit's promise of moving millions of commuters safely, swiftly and with minimal air pollutants per rider. You must seize this opportunity so that our country's transportation policy does not continue to overwhelmingly favor the private automobile."

—Rep. Glenn M. Anderson (D-CA), Chairman,
Committee on Public Works and Transportation,
addressing June 26 transit industry conference
at Marina Del Rey, CA

NARP and many other clean air advocates are disappointed by the failure of President Bush's clean air plan, unveiled June 12, to call for reduced auto use and increased reliance on mass transit and transit-supportive land-use planning.

Mass transit is not mentioned in the "comprehensive program to provide clean air for all Americans" President Bush announced June 12. Also missing: the need to encourage land-use development compatible with transit. The Bush transportation proposals rely almost exclusively on improved emissions performance by individual cars, and some of the measures use technology whose immediate utility and/or ultimate environmental impacts are unknown.

The president thus lost a golden opportunity to link clean air action with positive steps on global warming and urban/suburban "gridlock," 2 problems that would intensify as a result of the added pavement a transit-less clean air program almost certainly would mean. He might at least have included one pro-transit measure that his own secretary of transportation endorsed in Feb. 22 House testimony—equitable taxa-

(continued on page 4)

The Special Trains of Iowa ARP



—Photo by Bruce D. Williams

IARP's 12-car "Football Rocket" awaits game's end next to steps the University of Iowa rebuilt to accommodate passengers using both "Football Rocket" and "Chamber Expo Express."

The Iowa Association of Railroad Passengers is unique among state ARP's due to the energy it puts into organizing special trains. IARP specials in 1988 handled 12,000 passenger-trips (i.e., those making a round-trip are counted twice) on 6 separate operating days.

These big trains are planned to promote restoration of more regular passenger trains in Iowa: the specials appeal to the general public, go to events attended by big crowds—events where people are glad to have an alternative to the automobile!—and help Iowans see the advantages of passenger trains.

IARP Pres. (and former NARP Dir.) Scott L. Rogers says, "There aren't enough passenger trains in Iowa, so we have to run our own." IARP is also blessed with a cooperative freight railroad which, unlike Amtrak's "California Zephyr," serves Iowa's major population centers.

The 1988 specials all used parts of the old Rock Island Lines' east-west mainline, operated today by Iowa Interstate Railroad Ltd. Says Paul M. Victor, the railroad's executive vice-president, "Part of being a good corporate neighbor, as far as interaction with the public is concerned, is the operation of passenger trains for excursion purposes."



—Photo by Bruce D. Williams

In 1988, IARP introduced first class accommodations, using Private Cars Silver Solarium and Eagle Canon. Silver Solarium is shown on the rear of IARP's 14-car "Chamber Expo Express" leaving Iowa City Sep. 9.

In 1987, IARP ran a "Football 400" on Chicago & North Western between Chicago and Boone, IA for the Iowa-Iowa State game. For the same teams' Sep. 24, 1988 Iowa City contest, about 556 fans rode the 121 miles from Des Moines on IARP's "Football Rocket," as IARP revived a Rock Island Lines tradition of football specials that began in the 1890s and ended in 1974. IARP sponsored the "Football Rocket" with special cooperation from radio stations KRNA in Iowa City and WHO in Des Moines.

Sen. Charles E. Grassley (R-IA) was among the passengers on both the 1987 and 1988 football specials. All 3 of IARP's 1988 specials received good media coverage.

At the request of the sponsor, Iowa City Area Chamber of Commerce, cosponsor IARP organized the "Chamber Expo Express," which offered 20 round-trips (5 a day for 4 days, Sep. 7-10) for the World Ag Expo in the Amana Colonies, handling 9,921 passenger-trips the 25 miles between Iowa City and waiting shuttle buses at South Amana. As noted above, the train also stopped in Iowa City at the university.

Also in 1988, IARP cooperated with the 20th Century Railroad Club of Chicago on "Rocket '88," a 17-car special from Rock Island and Iowa City to the Iowa State Fair in Des Moines (177 miles one-way). The train handled 1,096 passenger-trips.

More details: Jan. '89 Iowa Rail News, available from Scott L. Rogers, 1203 W. 11th St., Cedar Falls 50613. (Upon request, he will provide info on possible 1989 IARP specials.) ■

Penn Station (continued from page 1)

(including thousands of daily commuters and probably the majority of long-distance passengers).

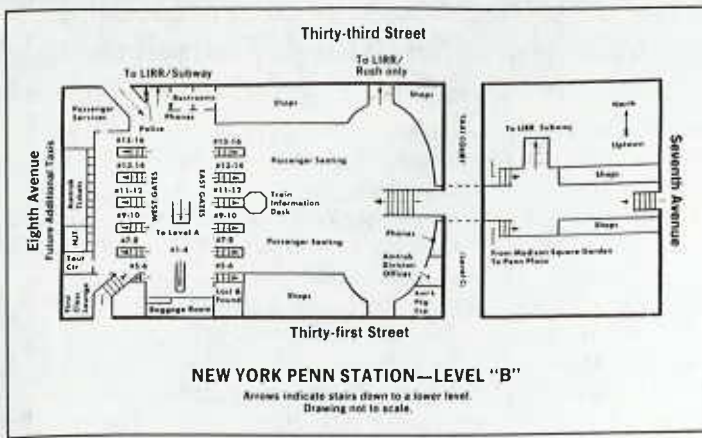
In late 1983, Amtrak's Board of Directors initially authorized \$13.4 million for "Phase I" improvements, though the total cost is now set at \$22 million. Phase I work began in 1984 and is to be completed in August. Besides the new ticket counter (30 windows, a 25% increase), there is a new tour center, station services office, restrooms and baggage facility. Numerous departure/arrival video monitors have been installed.

Still to be finished this summer are an upgrading of the heating, ventilation and air-conditioning system, refurbished waiting room, first-class passenger lounge, and improved access to street level. Also, elevators and escalators are being rebuilt and will make all levels of the station handicapped-accessible. A large Solari departure/arrival board will be located in the gate area, and smaller ones are located next to each gate.

The present system of floor levels will be maintained. From

A PENN STATION PLAN THAT DIDN'T HAPPEN

In the early 1980s, there were very different plans for Penn Station. Madison Square Garden, located since 1966 over Penn Station, was to be razed and relocated over the Metropolitan Transit Authority's 11th Avenue yards. A new 3.75 million square foot office and retail complex was to have been built by Gulf+Western over the station in place of the Garden. In exchange for zoning approval for the new development, G+W was to have made \$30 million in changes to Penn Station, such as improved access between the different levels of the station, wider corridors, penetration of light and air into all levels of the station and better street level identity of the station. The idea to move Madison Square Garden did not move past the planning stages. Now, the Garden is being refurbished in its present location.



bottom to top the levels are: Platform level (all tracks), Level A (Long Island Rail Road Station, subway entrances, shops), Level B (Amtrak Station, shops), Level C (street entrances, taxis). Level B, the Amtrak level, has direct escalator access to all 3 other levels. Arriving Amtrak passengers who leave the platforms on the escalators to Level A will, of course, arrive on that level—especially convenient for transfers to the subway and to LIRR.

A second taxi stand will be constructed along 8th Avenue. The current taxi court is very crowded, which often results in long delays for arriving passengers.

Planning for Phase II is underway. This phase will include:

- expanded and enhanced retail space;
- new or enhanced common areas (floors, ceilings, storefronts, etc.);
- refurbished office space;
- further upgrading of the ventilation system.

Besides having a nicer gateway to New York, Amtrak also expects that it will receive as much as \$3.5 million annually in additional revenues from retailers, which will help improve Amtrak's revenue-to-cost ratio. The station improvements and added waiting room/ticket counter capacity will also

BIG CITY PROBLEMS AT PENN STATION

Passengers arriving at Penn Station's street level should be aware of the so-called baggage hustlers and cab hailers. There aren't many of them, but they can cause problems for the unsuspecting passenger. Baggage hustlers are intimidating youths who will grab a passenger's bag saying, "Let me help you." They will then charge a \$10-15 "tip". If it's not paid, they will take the bag and run. Cab hailers do just that, but when passengers get out a purse or wallet to tip them, they will deftly remove all the money they want, or take the entire wallet or purse. There aren't enough police in New York to deter all of these hustlers. A passenger's best defense is to keep close grip on baggage, glare at the hustler and firmly say "no", making it very clear no assistance is needed.

New York City has a massive, tragic homeless problem, some of which naturally affects a public place like Penn Station. New York law does not give Amtrak police the authority to keep the homeless out, so they are simply kept moving or kept from sleeping on benches. Panhandling arrests seldom occur because they keep Amtrak officers in court for an entire day and rarely result in fines or jail for the panhandler. There are also many homeless at the bus terminal and at Grand Central, where the MTA allows use of two waiting rooms for the homeless.

help when Amtrak's Empire Corridor service is routed into Penn Station in 1991. Currently, Penn Station serves more than 82 million commuter and Amtrak passengers a year. When the West Side Connection is complete, Empire Corridor passengers will add at least a million to Penn Station's annual passenger total.

AMTRAK LURES JAPANESE TO MONTANA

"One 'product' that Montana is selling hard in Japan is its majestic mountain scenery. 'Our visitors from Japan are the fastest-growing part of Montana's tourism agency,' noted Dorothy Maitland, who said Japanese tour groups visiting Glacier and Yellowstone national parks constitute a significant share of business at her travel agency in Kalispell. . . .

"When Maitland first thought of bringing in Japanese tourists, she said, she was stymied by the fact that they like to see the sights from a train. 'I said, this is Montana. The only train we've got ["Empire Builder"]... goes through here in the middle of the night.'

"After stewing about this for a while, Maitland printed a Japanese brochure promoting the midnight rail journey as a romantic adventure: 'The Moonlight Express.' It worked.

"'We're selling tours on that moonlight train almost every day of the summer,' she told [a 'Trading with Japan'] conference [in Bozeman]. 'And our Japanese customers are buying like mad.'"

—"New Day on Trade: Big Sky Greet the Rising Sun," by T. R. Reid, in *The Washington Post*, May 10

TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

On July 18 ("Montrealer" startup), Amtrak's VT bus moves from Burlington to nearby Essex Jct.; s'bd 5:55 AM departure connects to #473/"Silver Meteor."

"San Joaquins" will serve Corcoran, CA, from July 29.

Amtrak's summer timetable applies through Oct. 28. Three new partially-state-funded services may begin around Oct. 29: a 3rd "San Joaquin" frequency, 2 added Chicago-Milwaukee frequencies, and a Mobile-Montgomery-Birmingham "Crescent" section.

To provide enough food cars for the new "San Joaquins," Amtrak's 100-car Bombardier order expanded to 104 cars, of which Amtrak had the first 44 by July 11. Drinking water & hot running water will be installed in these coaches by year's end and in the remaining coaches when they are built.

TAPE OFFER TO HELP NARP

Longtime NARP member and editor of the Tennessee ARP newsletter, Dr. Arthur Cushman, has compiled a cassette tape of ten classic American train songs. Part of the proceeds from tape sales will go to the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum and to NARP.

"Great American Train Songs, Volume I" includes such favorites as "Orange Blossom Special", "Rock Island Line" and "Wreck of the Old 97", by artists like Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis and Patti Page.

The tape sells for \$9.95 plus \$2.00 postage and handling (Tennessee residents add 7.75% sales tax). Please pay by check only and indicate plainly on the check that you are a NARP member, as NARP will get \$1 from each order. Make check payable to Roundhouse Records & Tapes, P.O. Box 210-314, Nashville, TN 37221-0314. Delivery time is three weeks.

Clean Air Omission (continued from page 1)

tion of employer-provided transit and parking employee benefits (*News*, Feb. p. 4, Mar. p. 4).

Fortunately there is some support in Congress for including a substantial transit component in the clean air package, but transit advocates will have to work hard to include it. **Please tell President Bush, legislators, and editorial writers you support clean air provisions that would encourage more use of transit and provide more funding to expand rail transit. Letters to the editor would also help.**

Politicians perceive heavy pressure to "enact stricter controls on automobiles, not on people," as one normally pro-transit legislator recently advocated—make individual cars cleaner, ban asbestos, do anything but discourage driving!

In fact, however, early adoption of incentives to use transit, including development of quality rail systems, could help insure that drastic "people controls" are never needed. On the other hand, for reasons noted below, a transit-less clean air program would almost certainly fail, at which point there would be great pressure to "control people."

The White House fact sheet acknowledges that "the major sources of volatile organic compounds (VOC), the most important ozone pre-cursor, are motor vehicles (40%) . . . (and) large point sources, e.g. petroleum refineries (15%); and gasoline refueling (5%). . . . Over the next decade, both the Environmental Protection Admin. and the Federal Highway Admin. estimate that growth in automobile use will begin to outstrip reductions occurring from fleet turnover, so that VOC emissions will increase after 2000."

But Bush's "urban air quality" transport-related measures aim only at cleaner cars (including "volatility controls on gasoline" and reduced evaporative emissions during refueling) and cleaner refineries; light duty trucks would be required for the first time to meet auto emissions standards. Bush claims his plan will solve the urban smog problem by 1995 in over 2/3 of "non-attainment cities," 2000 in 22 more cities, and, finally, 2010 in NY, Houston, and LA.

Nine areas with the worst smog get special attention: Bush's plan "is designed to ensure that one million clean-fueled vehicles per year are introduced into America's most polluted cities by the year 1997." The 9 areas: New York, Houston, Los Angeles, Chicago, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, Baltimore, San Diego, and Hartford/Springfield.

The plan does not clarify how people would be enticed into buying these vehicles or who would pay if incentives are needed. And the efficacy, distribution logistics, and environmental costs of "clean" fuels remain unclear.

The media has done a poor job of critiquing the Bush plan. Reporters and editorial writers seem wowed that the White House actually presented its own clean air legislation and Environmental Protection Administrator William K. Reilly won some much-reported debates within the administration.

A June 2 *New York Times* editorial claimed use of methanol as a motor fuel "could cut existing harmful tailpipe emissions by an astounding 80%," but American Petroleum Institute Pres. Charles J. DiBona, in a letter published June 16, said "methanol combustion results in substantial emissions, including oxides of nitrogen and formaldehyde, which [ed.: EPA says] is a probable human carcinogen and a highly reactive precursor of smog." A 1988 study at the University of California at Davis found that the most advanced prototype methanol vehicle so far, the Toyota Carina, "can be considered only slightly 'cleaner' than comparable gasoline vehicles."

"If methanol is made from natural gas, James MacKenzie

Waxman Noticed Transit!

H.R. 2323, the Clean Air Restoration Act of 1989, introduced May 11 by Rep. Henry Waxman (D-CA), who chairs the Energy and Commerce Subcomm. on Health and the Environment, and 115 co-sponsors comes closer to addressing NARP's concerns. If a clean air plan revision is not submitted within 4 years of enactment or EPA rejects the plan or the plan is not being implemented, the secretary of transportation may not award any highway grant in the area other than for mass transit or for transportation improvements accepted by EPA for air quality improvements or maintenance or to correct safety hazards.

Also under H.R. 2323, EPA must determine that transportation planning in the most-polluted areas includes use of all reasonable available techniques for reducing aggregate vehicle emissions, otherwise the state may not receive any federal transportation funds.

Other ideas federal lawmakers should note:

- Massachusetts is upgrading parking freezes in some areas and considering new ones elsewhere;
- Massachusetts Secy. of Environmental Affairs John DeVillars is studying a proposal to make mass transit free when smog levels are unhealthy.
- Ban nonessential city parking on high smog days.
- Hike tolls dramatically on bridges and highways leading to the city to "make the market work to discourage people getting into cars." (Ed.: Electronic peak-hour road pricing was found technically feasible in a Hong Kong test, is operating in Bergen, Norway, and is planned in the Netherlands. We already use it for long-distance phone service, why not roads?)
- Ensure that transit is available before new buildings are approved in Boston. (*The Boston Globe*, June 23).

There is really no substitute for providing additional transit capacity, however. Transit is already jammed in peak hours, so free transit "tomorrow" could be a real nightmare. Public resistance to peak-hour road pricing would likely be intense until attractive transit alternatives exist. And banning downtown construction before transit capacity is available might encourage developers to go to auto-dependent suburban locations. ■

(of the World Resources Institute) says it amounts to switching from one fossil fuel to another with no reduction in the release of carbon dioxide, the gas that contributes to the greenhouse effect. If methanol is made from coal, as it might some time in the future, the process would greatly increase carbon dioxide emissions compared with burning gasoline" (*The Boston Globe*, June 18). DiBona says the process would also increase dependence on foreign energy resources. He says 3/4 of exportable gas reserves are in the Soviet Union, Iran, Abu Dhabi, and Qatar.

Others claim ethanol (ethyl alcohol) is an "ideal" clean fuel for automobiles (*The Washington Post*, July 9, page B3). However, ethanol production today is economically unattractive—Brazil is reducing its program because the subsidies cost too much—and new technologies, while worthy of exploration, are unproven. ■

On June 9 in New York City, NARP's Harriet Parcells met with local environmental and transit activists to discuss ways to increase pressure for transit-related clean air measures.
