



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

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RETURN REQUESTED

Rail Battles Heat Up

NARP Board Renews Call for New Transportation Priorities

The NARP Board of Directors unanimously approved the following resolution at an Oct. meeting in Whitefish, Montana. The American Public Transit Assn.'s weekly Newspaper, Passenger Transport, printed the resolution as its prominent page 2 editorial Dec. 18. PT's introductory note said "the actions of NARP serve to remind us that building a coalition among many interests and groups—be they national or local—that share common ground will be key in making sure transit's message is heard."

"WHEREAS an overdependence on autos and trucks for personal travel and freight transport is a fundamental contributor to the serious environmental problems facing the U.S. (i.e., persistent, pervasive air pollution in urban areas) and the planet (global warming);

"WHEREAS transportation accounts for 63% of U.S. petroleum consumption;

"WHEREAS growth in the number of autos and trucks and vehicle-miles traveled is largely responsible for the huge appetite for oil that threatens our national security (by increasing our dependence on imported oil) and exacerbates our foreign trade deficit;

"WHEREAS growing highway and airport/airway congestion contributes to environmental degradation, wastes non-renewable resources and jeopardizes the economic vitality of urban areas and the quality of life of their inhabitants;

"WHEREAS large segments of our population, including a growing senior citizen population, need mass transit, intercity passenger trains and busses and other alternatives to single-occupant autos for access to jobs, social services, and other basic needs;

"WHEREAS trains are much safer than autos and trucks;

"WHEREAS public opinion polls and surveys nationwide, and ridership on rail transit systems, indicate public support for improved public transportation and a willingness to leave cars at home when there is an efficient, reliable alternative; and

"WHEREAS U.S. gasoline prices are among the lowest of

FRA Defends Rails vs. Truckers

"A moratorium on truck sizes for awhile and my rail lines will stop dying. The federal government and the people have to decide whether they want it all (freight) to move on the highways."

A freeze on truck sizes would not only save the highway system, but also ensure a healthy railroad industry . . . There is much excess capacity in the rail industry that could relieve congestion on the highway system, which "was never designed to handle today's loads."

—Federal Railroad Administrator Gil Carmichael, speaking to reporters in August, *Traffic World*, Aug. 28, and *Journal of Commerce*, Aug. 24

With Secretary of Transportation Samuel Skinner's "transportation policy" to be released in February, the truck vs. rail debate has been heating up in Washington. Federal Railroad Administrator Gil Carmichael has spoken up forcefully on

(Continued on page 4)

any industrialized nation and contribute to excessive use of non-renewable petroleum;

"THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) calls for a reordering of federal transportation priorities with

- at least a doubling of federal funding for mass transit;
- increased and secure funding for intercity passenger rail; and

- increased funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, investments essential to solving the mobility and environmental problems facing the nation and the planet; and

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NARP supports changes to the federal tax code to eliminate current biases that favor commuting by single-occupant auto and shipment of freight by truck over more energy-efficient railroads, and NARP supports an increase in the federal highway fuel tax and creation of a consolidated transportation trust fund with revenues available to mass transit, intercity passenger rail and bus and other clean alternatives to single-occupant autos." ■

Amtrak Announces Chicago-Pittsburgh Reroute

Amtrak has a tentative agreement with Conrail to reroute the New York-Chicago "Broadway Ltd." via Youngstown and Akron, OH, and Auburn, IN (CSX's former Baltimore & Ohio mainline) and to reroute the Washington-Chicago "Capitol Ltd." via Alliance and Cleveland, OH, making the same stops between Cleveland and Chicago as the "Lake Shore Ltd." plus a stop at Waterloo, IN. Dedicated bus connections would link Fort Wayne to Auburn or Garrett (about 20 miles) and Waterloo (about 30 miles) and Amtrak would maintain a Fort Wayne ticket office. Amtrak hopes the reroutes will happen in mid-1990.

Conrail's ex-Pennsylvania Railroad mainline across Indiana is essentially surplus for freight operations and there was a danger that Amtrak would have to start paying all track maintenance costs—as indeed Conrail was already asking Amtrak to do on the Gary-Valparaiso segment.

Amtrak said the route changes remove the trains "from a little used freight track and place them both on main line tracks which will be maintained for higher freight and passenger speeds." However, the new routes are slightly longer and may increase Chicago-Pittsburgh running-times by about 30 and 45 minutes for the "Broadway" and "Capitol," respectively.

Under the agreement, Conrail would build a track connection at Cleveland and prepare station platforms at new stops. Also, Amtrak will seek cooperation and support from communities on the new routes to prepare station facilities or shelters. Engineering will be performed during the winter so construction can begin in the spring.

Amtrak is considering stops to correspond roughly with current stops at Crestline and Lima, OH, and Warsaw, IN. Possibilities: North Baltimore, OH, near I-75, as well as Defiance, Fostoria, and Tiffin, OH and Nappanee or Syracuse, IN.

NARP is pleased that Amtrak will serve the important Cleveland-Pittsburgh and Cleveland-Washington markets and begin service to Akron and Youngstown (metro populations 647,000 and 502,500). We have urged Amtrak to link Michigan to the "Capitol," and thus to Pittsburgh-Washington, by means of an Ann Arbor-Detroit-Toledo connecting bus or train. (If bus, it should also serve Lansing.)

At the same time, we are concerned about the abandonment of train service in Fort Wayne and have notified inter-

TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

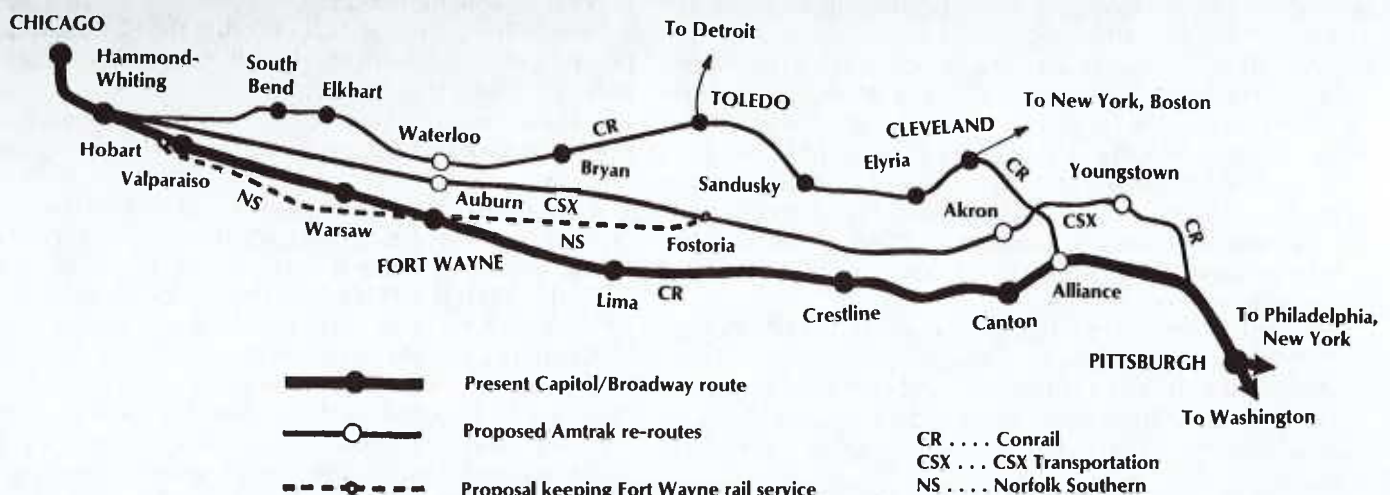
"Texas Eagle" goes from thrice-weekly to daily Jan. 20; schedule is modified south Jan. 19—an hour later (dpt. Chicago 4:15 PM); north Jan. 20—15 mins. later (dpt. Houston 9 AM; San Antonio 7:05 AM). Related changes: "State House" dpts. Chicago 6:50 PM Sat.+Sun., dpts. St. Louis 6 AM Sun. (means one new St. Louis round-trip/week); the eastbound "Sunset Ltd." will dpt. Los Angeles Tues. instead of Wed. (to permit efficient equipment turns for the new "Eagle" runs). From Jan. 15, "International" runs via Stratford, Ont., takes 25-50 mins. longer (only U.S. time-change: Sun.-only #367, 15 mins. earlier). Send s.a.s.e. for new timetable.

The 3rd "San Joaquin" began Dec. 17 (dep. Oakland 11 am south; Bakersfield 11:25 am north) and the other "San Joaquins" schedules changed. The Bakersfield-Riverside Amtrak/Caltrans Thruway bus was extended to Palm Springs-Palm Desert-Indio Oct. 29, connecting with "San Joaquins" #708-709. New San Diego-El Cajon-El Centro-Calexico bus connects with "San Diegans" twice daily. The Palo Alto-Stockton bus line was cut back to San Jose. New Truckee-Tahoe bus connects with "California Zephyr" to/from Oakland. Send an s.a.s.e. (45¢ postage) to us for California DOT's timetable showing all this. (Sad to say, the winter Amtrak national timetable does not show stations or schedules for most California Thruway services.)

ested parties of our support for keeping the "Broadway" in Fort Wayne if non-Amtrak capital funds—preferably from the State of Indiana—can be found to permit use of the Norfolk Southern (ex-Nickel Plate) between Fostoria and Hobart, IN. Capital funding would be required to build proper connections at those 2 points and to acquire (or otherwise resolve problems with Conrail on) the Hobart-Gary segment. (Gary is just east of Hammond.)

If non-Amtrak sources for this capital can be found, NARP believes Amtrak should and would shoulder any increased operating costs, since they would be largely or totally offset by higher Fort Wayne revenues and elimination of the "Capitol's" Fort Wayne feeder bus.

We urge NARP members to encourage the State of Indiana and/or others to provide the funds needed to keep trains running to Fort Wayne.



Pittsburgh and Memphis Highlight Progress on Amtrak Stations

Amtrak is making progress in solving one of its oldest and most difficult problems: getting decent stations in big cities where Amtrak has a small presence but much potential. The traffic growth Amtrak experienced in the year since Washington Union Station opened is a reminder that attractive stations are important in getting people to travel by train.

Pittsburgh's new station opened Oct. 27 and was dedicated Nov. 17; Amtrak expects to return to Cincinnati Union Terminal next fall; plans are shaping up for a good new station in a better location in Memphis; and Amtrak may yet stay in Denver Union Station.

Pittsburgh

The \$3 mill. facility is in the basement of the former Penn Station (now a renovated apartment complex) at 11th St. & Liberty Ave. in downtown Pittsburgh. From 1978 until Oct., Amtrak used a "temporary" trailer facility behind the old station on the track platforms. The site is near intercity buses and the light rail system. The Keystone Association of Railroad Passengers maintains a bulletin board in the new station.

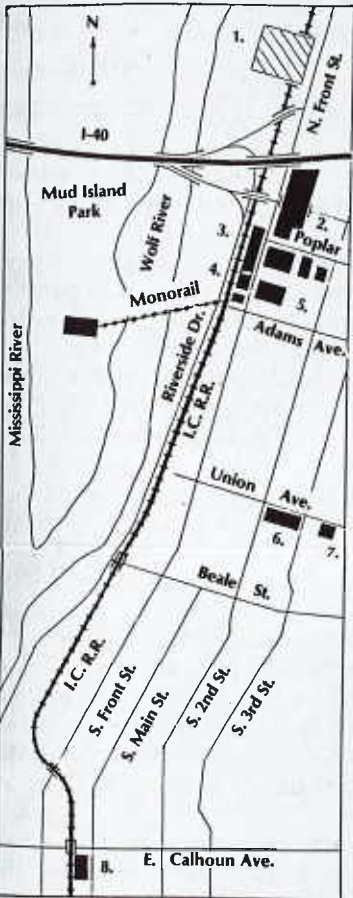
Memphis

One of Amtrak's most legendarily dismal stations may become history as early as Oct., 1990. Amtrak has been talking with the City of Memphis for years on replacing old Central Station with a new facility closer to downtown, planning for which is now underway. Final approval by the Amtrak Board is pending.

Central Station, built in 1915, still has many of its old ornamental fittings, a large former waiting area, and 5 floors of former office space, but it would be costly to restore and no renovation plan has yet been successfully put forward. Illinois Central has not maintained the building and it fell into an alarming state of disrepair years ago. Also, the surrounding neighborhood has grown less attractive—an important consideration because Amtrak trains stop in the middle of the night.

For some time, it was uncertain whether the city would renew Illinois Central's lease of the downtown mainline right-of-way. In resolving the issue, the city reserved the right to use part of the right-of-way for a light rail line.

The new station is to be right at the west edge of downtown on the riverfront (see map)—about 1¼ miles north of Central Station—in the south end of a parking



1. Proposed Convention Center
2. Civic Center Buildings
3. Mud Island Garage
4. Proposed Amtrak Station
5. City Hall
6. Peabody Hotel
7. Greyhound Bus Depot
8. Central Station

—NARP Graphics/Scott Leonard



—Photos by Robert P. Abraham

New Pittsburgh Amtrak station entrance on Liberty Ave. Part of old Penn Station visible at upper right. Tracks are on upper level.



View of upper level lobby. Waiting room is below, the tracks are through the door, elevator on the left.

garage built a few years ago at the end of the people mover/walkway to the River Center in Mud Island Park. The garage is on the IC main line at Front St. and Adams Ave. just across from City Hall, and is only a few blocks south of the new pyramid-shaped convention center projected to open in 1991.

Preliminary designs should be ready in Jan. The new station will feature entrances from both streets as well as from within the garage itself. The track level lies downhill from Front St., so access from that entrance will be by stairs or elevator. A new platform and canopy will be erected. The waiting room will be under a pyramid-shaped glass skylight.

Denver

Developers would love to kick Amtrak and the Denver Ski Train out of Union Station, also killing the possibility that this ideal downtown location could serve as a hub for local rail service in this huge metro area choking on auto fumes.

These developers are eager for taxpayers to pay to relocate Amtrak to . . . anywhere, however, and Mayor Federico Pena finally said Amtrak would stay where it is because the developers won't fund the relocation. (The most recent disastrous location proposed is 27th and Blake Streets.)

The developers aren't giving up, however, and are trying to get federal lawmakers to change the rules so that federal highway funds could pay to relocate Amtrak.

STATEMENT OF OMBUDSMAN		GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE AND REGULATORY DIVISION	
Name of the Party or Parties		Date	
The Amtrak Board of Directors		12-1-89	
Subject		10-10-89	
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Rail Battles (continued from page 1)

behalf of rail transportation. Truckers reportedly were unhappy with some draft sections of the policy they've been shown, but most recently Mr. Skinner seemed to have come out on the truckers' side.

In an interview in the Dec. 25 *Traffic World*, Mr. Skinner said: "The railroads . . . have some real impediments to being competitive. When you consider some of the work rules that exist and consider some of the collective bargaining agreements . . . they are at a significant disadvantage in competing with the trucking industry," but DOT should not "jerryrig the system to make [railroads] more competitive because we haven't been able to deal with the problems we have."

It is alarming that a transportation secretary would confine comments about impediments to railroad competitiveness to obsolete work rules, as if massive indirect subsidies to truckers didn't exist. As for obsolete work rules, he could have acknowledged the progress rail management and labor continue to make in addressing those problems.

If Mr. Skinner thinks faster progress is needed, he might want to address how federal law slows things up. That's politically touchy, but so—as Mr. Skinner acknowledged—is combining the highway and airport trust funds into one large trust fund, an idea he endorsed in the same interview.

It sounds too much as though Mr. Skinner is defending today's disastrous public policies as they affect railroads vs. trucks. We hope he does not really consider making trucks pay their full highway cost responsibility to be "jerryrigging."

Earlier, Federal Railroad Administrator Gil Carmichael said publicly what lots of people in less prominent positions have been saying—or have believed—for years. In a letter in Sep. 8 *J of C*, responding to editorial criticism of his "cheerleading" for the railroads, he wrote: "As the secretary's adviser on railroad policy, my role is to evaluate and underscore rail's potential of unused capacity in the nation's transportation mix.

"A healthy, dynamic railroad industry, both freight and passenger, will not only contribute to the nation's economic growth, but also relieve some congestion from our highways and airways while responding to environmental and energy priorities. A balanced national transportation policy will underscore the value of a privately funded rail infrastructure that is already in place and is in excellent operating condition."

It will be interesting to see if official Washington can digest common sense that offends the trucking lobby.

James J. Johnston, president of the Owner-Operators Independent Drivers Assn., reacted by urging Mr. Skinner to appoint a "co-chair" to the Intercity Freight Cluster group working on DOT's transportation policy. One modal administration has the lead role in each cluster; FRA has the lead with Intercity Freight and Skinner's agreement to such a

Skinner vs. Amtrak?

Interviewed Dec. 19 by CBS Radio, the Secretary said: "The administration is not pushing to eliminate Amtrak; it's pushing for self-sufficiency. The problem with Amtrak is the American people feel that on some of its routes it is not cost-effective and in fact there are empty cars and empty seats."

This reminds one of Secretary Drew Lewis's Mar. 26, 1981 reference to "empty" Amtrak trains on ABC-TV's "Good Morning America." 11 months later, Lewis became the first sitting transportation secretary to board a long-distance passenger car, on Feb. 19, 1982 at Albuquerque, where he said: "As long as you have Jack Schmitt and Pete Domenici in the U.S. Senate, there is no way that [then Amtrak Pres.] Alan Boyd and I can't continue to provide Amtrak service to New Mexico." Boyd called Lewis "the most supportive transportation secretary I have known."

Given the progress Amtrak has made since 1982, we hope Mr. Skinner can be converted into a supportive transportation secretary in much less than a year—or that we have placed too much importance on his comments to CBS.

However, "common wisdom" in Washington is that the administration's FY 1991 budget will include yet another zero for Amtrak, forcing the appropriations committees to make the *real* tough choices the White House continually avoids—unless you call writing a "dead-on-arrival" budget a tough choice.

request would have been seen as a rebuke to Carmichael and to the process Skinner had established. The request was turned down.

The railroads themselves are starting to speak up more aggressively. They have begun to talk up safety. A paper the Association of American Railroads (AAR) prepared for the DOT policy effort says: "The railroad safety record is far superior to that of highways in nearly every respect; if highways had been able to achieve the same safety improvement over a 10-year period (1978-87) as railroads, some 15,000 lives would be saved each year."

Overall, AAR stated, "the full economic costs of the transportation services provided by trucks substantially exceed the costs of providing the same services by rail." This includes energy efficiency, environmental impact, and highway wear-and-tear.

"Railroads require perhaps one-quarter the fuel to move a ton of freight one mile as trucks, which means they release less pollution, per ton-mile, into the air," says AAR Vice President Daniel L. Lang. AAR also notes that heavy trucks make little or no contribution to highway overhead costs, which have been estimated at up to 50% of all highway expenditures.

A few railroaders are even talking about getting some revenue out of the highway trust fund if the government fails to start charging big trucks the full costs of the damage they do to roads, but AAR's efforts are focussed entirely on adequate big-truck charges.

NARP members can help support Carmichael and his views. If you can generate letters from organizations outside the railroad world, that would be especially helpful. We think the administrator's common-sense views are widely shared; legislators, Sec. Skinner and President Bush need to hear from others supporting the same views. ■

AMTRAK'S 1990 CALENDAR . . .

. . . 23 1/2" x 33" sports a Gil Reid color painting of the "Montrealer"—pulled by the 2 F69 locomotives expected to enter revenue service in April—crossing an arm of Lake Champlain at East Alburg, VT. The bridge tender's shanty sports the Central Vermont logo. \$5 for one; quantity discounts. Order this and back issues 1980-89 (at reduced rates) from Amtrak Calendar, PO Box 7717, Itasca, IL 60143.