

Vital Government Rail Decisions Due

The nation's belated attention appears to be focusing on the myriad problems of rail transportation. The result could be governmental decisions which will determine the long term future of rail passenger service.

Failure of the Penn Central, Lehigh Valley, Boston & Maine, Erie & Lackawanna, Reading, Main Central and Central of New Jersey Railroads, a strike by Penn Central employees, a series of accidents in recent weeks, and "slow" orders for Amtrak trains because of poor track conditions — all have helped to gain the attention of government and the public.

The Interstate Commerce Commission has asked Congress to impose a \$500 million per year tax — one per cent against all goods shipped by surface — to raise funds to help finance railroad rehabilitation. An ICC investigation into the overall situation is underway.

On March 16, DOT issued its long-awaited Amtrak Report. (NARP's comments on the report appear on page four in this issue). The report, considered generally "positive", appears to give the Administration's blessing for continued life of Amtrak. (This is contrast to dire predictions by some that the report would signal the end of Amtrak).

In the Senate, the "Essential Rail Services Act of 1973" was introduced, providing for national track maintenance, loan guarantees, and a northeast rail corporation which would own and maintain rail rights of ways. A similar bill has been introduced in the House.

In the courts, the federal judge presiding over the Penn Central bankruptcy case has indicated that unless a solution is reached by October 1, he will have to shut down the railroad.

The Senate has again voted to open up the Highway Trust Fund for financing of rail rapid transit systems, and the bill is now being examined in the House, where it was defeated last year.

Also in the House, the Surface Transportation Act, which died in the 1972 Congress, has been reintroduced. It provides

federal loan guarantees for the viable but marginal railroads to help prevent a continuing wave of bankruptcies. It eliminates unfair state and local taxation, provides a new rate structure, takes the government out of discriminatory transportation rate making, and directs the ICC to establish uniform accounting procedures for the industry.

On March 26, Secretary of Transportation Claude S. Brinegar issued the DOT Plan for the Northeast Railroads, in which he proposed establishment of a private for profit corporation patterned after the Federal National Mortgage Association.

The new company would proceed to design one or more rail systems in the Northeast, based on a "core" rail system designated by the Department of Transportation. One or more new railroads could emerge, or the systems could be taken-over by existing railroads. Stock of the new company would be distributed to the bankrupt railroads. Unprofitable lines would be abandoned or sold, without the necessity of Interstate Commerce Commission approval.

"Quite clearly, there is a healthy rail system trying to crawl out of the Northeastern wreck. All of us, working together, can help it escape," Secretary Brinegar stated.

No federal funding was proposed by DOT in connection with its plan.

Thus, the stage is set for a series of actions which could determine the future of rail passenger service — both commuter and inter-city — for decades to come.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

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Governor Sargent Proposes Network Of Interstate Railroad Lines

A federally-funded network of interstate rail lines similar to the federal highway network has been proposed to Congress by NARP Advisory Board member Francis W. Sargent, governor of Massachusetts.

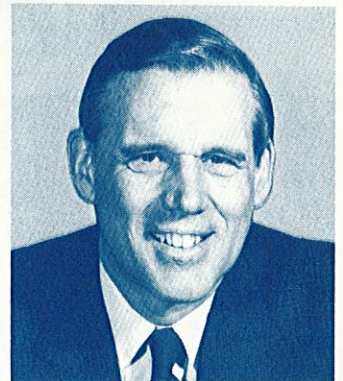
The governor made his proposal to a Senate subcommittee hearing concerning the problems of the Northeast railroads in particular and the nation's railroads in general.

Gov. Sargent told the committee that "we cannot survive without trains. We cannot substitute trucks or airplanes for railroads.

"We cannot absorb the immense financial costs or the massive environmental damage the loss of the railroad will cause.

"We can chose to continue our subsidies of a system which is inefficient and is providing poor service or we can chose to break with the past and develop an exciting railway system. I hope we choose the second course," the governor stated.

In his home state, Gov. Sargent has proposed a \$2 billion transportation program in which two major highway projects would be eliminated and most of the funds would be spent for modern rail transportation.



Tony Haswell, chairman of NARP, (left) bids goodbye to Former Secretary of Transportation John Volpe, now United States Ambassador to Italy. "In general, Mr. Volpe was very helpful to the cause of the rail passenger, and we owe him a vote of thanks," Mr. Haswell said. Volpe was honored at a reception prior to his departure for Italy.

NARP Supports Senate Bill To Form N. E. Rail Line Corporation

The Department of Transportation, in its Amtrak Report, quite correctly identified one of the major problems of rail passenger service as maintenance of roadbed, which is also a freight rail problem. DOT made the point rather forcefully, as follows:

"Railroad operational problems stemming from poor track maintenance are not confined to either passenger or to freight services. Almost a third of Amtrak's delays are attributable to "slow orders" — areas in which temporary speed restrictions have been placed due to track conditions. But inadequate track main-

tenance has an even greater impact on freight operations; slow speeds and delays cause increased costs due to poor utilization of crews and equipment. Quality of service is adversely affected. Freight is the railroad industry's primary source of revenue. To move it efficiently requires a well-maintained plant. Therefore, adequate track and roadbed maintenance is essential."

NARP urges its members to support a bill now before the Senate (S. 1031), which would go far toward solving the roadbed problem. Senate Bill 1031 would:

First, require the designation of an interstate railroad system which would identify main lines in the United States which must be upgraded to standards which would insure dependable operation of freight trains at speeds up to 60 miles an hour and passenger trains at speeds up to 80 miles an hour;

Second, require the Secretary of Transportation to provide within 2 years a report on the long-term capital needs for railroads;

Third, provide for the creation of a Northeast Rail Line Corporation. The Corporation would be a not-for-profit entity with 13 members on the Board of Directors appointed by the President, affected States, railroads, Amtrak, rail labor, and shippers;

Fourth, provide that within 6 months after enactment of the act, the Corporation will acquire all track and roadbed—exclusive of terminals and declassification yards—owned by bankrupt railroads

in the Northeast in exchange for debentures equivalent to the net liquidation value of the property conveyed. On different terms, the rail lines of other Northeast carriers may also be acquired;

Fifth, require that the Corporation assume responsibility for rehabilitation and maintenance of all lines it owns, including secondary and branch lines, and for the operation of signalling and communication devices. The operation of the carriers' rail service would remain with the railroads or in the case of passenger service with the Amtrak Corporation.

Sixth, require that line abandonments be in accordance with procedures providing substantial notice, ICC approval, plus an opportunity for affected States, communities, or private companies to retain the service by sharing on a 50-50 basis the maintenance and rehabilitation costs;

Seventh, require substantial protection for railroad employees from job loss or worsening of position;

Eighth, require the payment of user charges by railroads or Amtrak on a 60 cents per thousand gross ton-miles of locomotive and train operations. The 60 cents represents a cost figure for maintenance and rehabilitation by some of the healthier railroads. That is a preliminary figure subject to later revision—see attachment at end of statement; and

Ninth, provide for an authorization of \$50 million for organization expenses of the Corporation; \$300 million in each of the first 2 years for rail line rehabilitation of corporation rail lines; \$100 million per year for maintenance, capital improvements and overhead expense of the Corporation; \$1 billion of Federal guarantees for debentures for the acquisition of track and roadbed by the Corporation; and loan guarantees not to exceed \$200 million to all qualified railroads throughout the United States for track and roadbed improvements to meet Federal standards.

Speed?

Main Street U.S.A.



Courtesy of San Diego Union

"We cannot condone freight train interference with our passenger trains."

—F.S. King, Vice President — Operations, Amtrak, March 6, 1973.

Amtrak Agent Business Almost Double That of Previous Year: \$8,006,737

Amtrak's more than 5,300 worldwide travel agents did almost twice as much rail business in 1972 as in the previous year.

Amtrak's Vice President — Marketing Harold L. Graham said gross ticket sales by Amtrak's agents last year totaled \$8,006,737. The total does not include an estimated \$325,000 in agent rail sales abroad to tourists coming from overseas.

The 1971 total, which does include sales to passengers from overseas, was \$4,412,564.

Mr. Graham said he expects a further increase of at least 25 per cent in sales by Amtrak travel agents in 1973.

Amtrak's Agency and Tour Division, under the direction of Arthur Lloyd, has organized a selection of rail tours which can be sold by agents. Agents receive 10 per cent commissions on tours and round-trips, even if a portion of such a tour trip is by another transportation mode.

Inauguration of Amtrak service to Vermont and Montreal late last year, for instance, was quickly followed by development of a series of all-inclusive rail travel packages to ski resorts in Vermont and in the Laurentian Mountains near Montreal.

ANNUAL MEETING APRIL 24

The Annual Meeting of the National Association of Railroad Passengers will be held at 9 a.m. Tuesday, April 24, 1973, at the National Lawyers Club, 1815 H St., N.W., Washington, D.C.

CBS-TV BLASTS AMTRAK ON 'SIXTY MINUTES' SHOW

CBS Television's "Sixty Minutes" took Amtrak to task March 11, with a full display of problems ranging from badly-maintained tracks to the management ability of Roger Lewis, president of Amtrak.

U.S. Senator Vance Hartke told the interviewer (Mike Wallace) that Roger Lewis doesn't have "that type of imagination, that type of dedication to really continue this operation. I'm not sure he wants to keep it going. I'm not sure that he himself is dedicated to a continuity of passenger service for people." At this the interviewer interjected, "Now wait a second. What you're suggesting is that he's taken a job to preside over the demise of passenger traffic?" Replied Hartke, "We have people, you know, who are in the liquidation business, all thru the country. And I think maybe Roger Lewis is one of them."

Mr. Lewis made some good points:

"We in Amtrak have a responsibility to the public to surface this argument so there can be a debate about the role of railroad passenger service. . . We spend tremendous amounts of money on transportation in this country, and a very small amount of that total directed to railroad passenger service would produce very significant results."

Generally, the program brought out the deficiencies of Amtrak, but failed to show its accomplishments.

A copy of the transcript of the program is available from NARP.

Pittsburgh Study Recommends Commuter Use of 140-Mile Existing Rail Network

An eleven-month study by the transportation engineering firm of Ford, Bacon & Davis states that Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, can have a 140-mile rail commuter service for \$40,000,000 within two years through use of existing railroad and streetcar lines.

The study, which cost \$50,000 (financed by Richard Mellon Scaife, publisher of the Greensburgh, Pennsylvania, Tribune) was made under the auspices of Dr. William R. Hunt, Allegheny County commissioner and longtime foe of the Pittsburgh "Skybus" proposal.

The "Skybus", a rubber-tired vehicle running on an elevated concrete track, is estimated to cost \$190 million for the initial 11-mile segment from downtown Pittsburgh to the wealthy suburb of Mt. Lebanon.

The Ford, Bacon & Davis Report recommends vast improvements on five existing railway and trolley lines, including the South Hills trolley, Penn Central's main line to Greensburgh and Latrobe, Penn Central's Monongahela Line to West Brownsville, and the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie line to Beaver Falls.

Dr. Hunt said more than 110,000 passengers a day would use the system.

Why No Amtrak Timetables Available?

I have just been on the telephone with a very polite young lady at the Amtrak information office. Having no particular destination in mind, I requested information as to how I could secure a timetable. Apologetically the young lady told me they had no timetables but were "hoping" to receive some in the near future. Wherever we decide to visit we want to go by train - we love them and feel that is the way to see our country. Needless to say, I find the lack of timetables incredible.

-Melville Tucker, Los Angeles

Nationalization Score Is 38 Per Cent For, 44 Per Cent Against - Gallup

Approximately 38 per cent of Americans are for nationalization of the nation's railroads, while 44 per cent are against such a move, according to a recent Gallup survey.

Gallup said the percentages are reversed among persons living in metropolitan areas of one million or more, with 45 per cent for nationalization and 34 per cent against.

The poll also indicated that, even though a plurality is against nationalization, Americans take a dim view of the way the railroads are being run today. Railroads in the West and Midwest got much higher "scores" than those in the East.

Support NARP - Bring In A New Member

Yes, I want to aid the cause of better rail passenger service. I understand I will receive a membership card and a monthly newsletter to keep me informed of developments.

Enclosed is my remittance for the category checked. I understand that \$3.00 of this amount is for a one-year subscription to the newsletter.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing \$10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsoring \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participating \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining \$100 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Life, \$500 or more |

(Please Print)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

(NARP members should not use this form to renew. It would be helpful if members wait until they receive the coded renewal reminder.)

"President Nixon demonstrated his strong support for revitalized intercity rail passenger service by sponsoring the National Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970 - the genesis of Amtrak. In its early months of operation, Amtrak has made encouraging gains toward reaching the President's goal, and we think further progress can be made."

-Secretary of Transportation
Claude S. Brinegar

Rail Group Organized in Massachusetts

The "Citizens for Rail Transportation" has been organized in Massachusetts, with strong links to the Greater Boston Committee for the Transportation Crisis and the Southwest Corridor Transportation Committee. The new group, which has approximately 500 members, is also establishing contact with citizens groups in western Massachusetts and in Vermont.

"We plan to organize people on the South Shore for the purpose of restoring rail service on the Old Colony Line," says Elisabeth S. Pultz, executive secretary of the group. "The demand is there, but not yet organized," she added. The organization is enlisting representatives for each rail line, whose names will be posted in the stations, in order that they may be easily contacted. Co-chairmen of the association are Eugene Skoropowski, 24 Pine St., Melrose, and Polly W. Russell, 101 Pelham Island Rd., Wayland.

NARP Board Thanks Joseph Vranich

The Board of Directors of NARP, by resolution, has expressed the association's gratitude and appreciation to Joseph Vranich, former executive director, "for his splendid service in behalf of American railroad passengers." The board also complimented Mr. Vranich on the aggressive and efficient manner in which he carried-out his duties during the past two years.

Mr. Vranich is now a senior economic consultant for the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak).

NARP Reacts to DOT Report; 'Upgrading of Roadbed Is Essential'

NARP believes that \$93 million per year is adequate for operating deficits, and that the proposed additional loan guarantee authority of \$300 million will enable Amtrak to make meaningful capital improvements.

NARP particularly commends DOT for its support in principle of direct supervision and employment by Amtrak of all full-time personnel involved with Amtrak operations.

NARP emphatically agrees with DOT that upgrading of track and roadbed is essential not only for Amtrak but for high quality freight service.

NARP is strongly opposed to the DOT recommendation that Amtrak be allowed to discontinue the Chicago-Florida trains. The Association believes that this service has excellent potential, and that its poor performance to date has resulted from Amtrak mismanagement.

NARP will not object to the recommended discontinuance of the New York-Kansas City route provided that the St. Louis-Kansas City segment is retained, and that new connecting service is established between central Ohio and the east coast.

NARP is unconcerned about DOT recommendations that ICC power over discontinuances and standards of service be eliminated, because the ICC has made clear on numerous occasions that it is no friend of the railroad passenger.

Brochure, Bumper Stickers Available

A brochure "Who Owns The Land?" is available at 40 cents per copy from the Center for Rural Studies, 345 Franklin St., San Francisco. The brochure has a section on "Railroad Empires" which contains interesting data on the history of western railroads.

Bumper stickers which proclaim the message "Avoid Strain, Take the Train" are available at cost from Gene Ransom, 2102 Burns Lane, Camden, S.C. 29020. Send a self-addressed large envelope with 16 cents postage affixed plus \$1.00 (for six stickers).

"We are choking on the fumes of our own exhaust. We are spending literally millions of unproductive hours examining the bumpers of our neighbors' cars, and we stand immobilized, waiting for trains that never arrive. The time has come to say ENOUGH."

—William Cahil, Governor of New Jersey

FRIENDS OF THE RAILROAD PASSENGER

Congressman John J. McFall

House Majority Whip John J. McFall is chairman of the Transportation Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, a position in which he has been helpful to legislation which is beneficial to rail passengers.

Congressman McFall is a strong advocate of a national transportation policy, which he has been urging DOT to provide. In his home state, Mr. McFall has been seeking an Amtrak connection between the San Francisco Bay Area and Bakersfield, through Fresno.

Mr. McFall, who represents the 15th Congressional District, California, has served in the House of Representatives since 1957. His district includes all of San Joaquin County, western Stanislaus County and eastern Sacramento County.

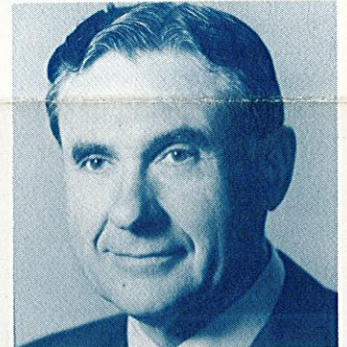
He was appointed majority whip of the House of Representatives at the beginning of the 93rd Congress. Cong. McFall was first appointed to the Whip organization as the California zone whip in 1962 by former House Speaker John McCormack, and in 1970 was selected as one of two Majority floor whips.

Congressman McFall, an attorney, began his public career as mayor of Manteca in 1948 and then served three terms in the State Assembly from San Joaquin County from 1951 to 1956, when he was elected to the Congress. He attended public schools in Manteca, and graduated from Modesto Junior College and the University of California at Berkeley, with a degree in political science, and from Boalt Hall, the Berkeley campus law school, with a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree in 1941. He was admitted to the California State Bar the same year.

During World War II, Mr. McFall served in the Army Security Intelligence Corps from 1942 to 1946.

The Congressman is married to the former Evelyn Anklam, and they have three children: Joseph, Alicia and Sarah.

His District residence is 316 West North Street, Manteca. The District Office is located at 146 North Grant Street, Manteca 95336, and the Washington Office is Room 2346 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515.



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Anthony Haswell, Chairman
Robert J. Casey, Executive Director

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Ross B. Capon
74 Craigie St., #22
Somerville, MA 02143
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