



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

Vol. 10, No. 10 October, 1976

417 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003
202-546-1550

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9 was mailed Oct. 20)

RETURN REQUESTED

AMTRAK HEADS ADDRESS NARP

Encouragement for those who seek large windows on the next generation of single-level cars has come from Amtrak President Paul H. Reistrup, who became a member of the Amtrak Board when President Ford signed the "Rail Transportation Improvement Act" (including Amtrak authorization) on Oct. 19. In his first engagement as a Board member, Reistrup talked from his Virginia home, by means of a telephone/public address hookup, to the NARP Board as it met in Chicago. Appearing in person before the NARP meeting as the luncheon speaker was Joseph V. MacDonald, who holds one of three consumer representative slots on the Amtrak Board (Mary Head is also a consumer representative, and the third such position is one of the vacancies).

Reistrup referred to the lack of new long-distance low-level cars as the "big gap" in Amtrak's equipment stock. Such cars are required on Eastern long-haul trains because of bridge and tunnel clearances, primarily in the NE Corridor, which do not permit use of bi-levels. He said that filling this gap "is the next step. We do have the money provided in the five-year plan... And we hope on those cars to be able to have a bigger window than we do on the Amfleet, which is really a corridor, 'people-mover' type of train. And if we're fortunate — and I think we will be — we'll have a lot more viewing capability on those cars."

He also underscored his support for including sightseeing/lounge cars in the new bilevel trains. He mentioned the likelihood of shifting the hi-level cars now running Chicago-LA over to Chicago-Laredo and possibly Chicago-New Orleans, once the former route gets new cars. He noted the need for research

Piedmont case is going to be the telling tale here.") Amtrak hopes, Reistrup said, to operate the New Orleans-Los Angeles service on a daily basis by next summer ("If we're going to run a train, we've got to run it daily.") He acknowledged a need to get 40 minutes out of the Boston "Lake Shore" schedule, referred to a \$9 million advertising budget (twice the amount spent last year), and mentioned an across the board 5% reduction in management positions.

He noted the possibility of a future Chicago-Cleveland turbo service, and specifically requested input on the ideas of (1) running the Chicago-New Orleans service as a "Palmetto"—style day train, and (2) consolidating the two Chicago-Seattle trains to run as one train Chicago-Minneapolis roughly on the present "Empire Builder" schedule, with the operation of a separate Chicago-Minneapolis train, the westbound trip to run earlier than today's "North Coast Hiawatha".

(continued on p. 4)

South Shore: Now or Never

Indiana residents can help save the electric commuter service provided by the South Shore Line between Chicago, Gary, Michigan City, and South Bend. The railroad has petitioned the ICC for permission to discontinue all passenger service Dec. 8 (ICC Finance No. 28322).

The key problem is lack of public capital funds to permit replacement of the 50-year old cars. The Indiana Mass Transportation Improvement Project is preparing legislation which would permit the use of state funds to help match the 80% Federal funding which could be made available.

Hoosiers are urged to write to their state legislators in support of this legislation. Additionally, residents of Lake and Porter Counties should write to their county councils urging action to make the local share available. The councils' offices are at: Lake County Government Complex, Crown Point 46307 and City-County Building, Valparaiso 46383.

These letters might also urge action to enable state and county officials, together, to come up with the 10% non-Federal operating subsidy money required for continuation of the Conrail Chicago-Valparaiso commuter trains beyond March 26.

The NARP Board, at its recent Chicago meeting, approved a resolution noting that discontinuance of the South Shore Line "would have a particularly unfortunate impact on low-income groups now primarily dependent" on it and urging Indiana authorities at all levels to act to save the service.

If the ICC decides to investigate (the announcement will have been made by November 26), the service would survive at least until early April.

Ridership, currently 6,200 trips per day, has been hurt by the old equipment and horrendous fares. The Chicago-Gary (31 miles) monthly ticket has been \$62.25 since 1972, whereas Chicago-Joliet (37 miles) was raised Nov. 1 by Ill. RTA to \$51.30!

LATE FLASHES: The Amtrak Board on Nov. 17 approved acquisition of 35 additional bilevel cars: 25 sightseer lounges, 6 baggage/coach combines, and 4 diners. Thus 284 bilevels are approved, and Chicago-New Orleans and Chicago-Texas ("Lone Star") services could operate with all-new equipment in the slack season, in addition to western long-hauls (numbers 1 through 14) year-round. With ICC action, last run of Southern's DC-Charlotte "Piedmont" was set for Nov. 28. More on this in December.

aimed at replacing lexan. Looking toward the future, he acknowledged the political sensitivity of Amtrak's increasing deficit, cautioning that Amtrak has to "have the frequency and the service on the routes where the people are and get our ridership up or I think we're really going to be put under pressure because of the cost of this operation."

In answering questions, he addressed the possibility of adding single rooms in future bilevel orders ("This depends on the market and we're flexible."); the Springfield-New Haven-New York route ("We hope we can build that Springfield line up to the point that we actually could use the Amfleet up there and fill it up."); and the possibility of Southern giving over its passenger service to Amtrak. "We are open minded. I think that the

NARP Regional Meetings

The second annual election by all NARP members of their Board of Directors will be conducted early in 1977 during the regional meetings listed below. Canadian members are eligible to vote in the region adjacent (or closest) to their residence.

Any member of NARP whose dues are current is eligible to vote. (Recently-joined members should bring their membership card, since the lists provided to those in charge of the meetings will only be current as of early December.)

If you cannot attend the meeting in your region, you should mail to the first name listed below for your region a letter which gives your name and address, and lists the persons for whom you wish to vote. Such letters must be received by the time of the scheduled meeting in order to be counted.

All of the persons listed below are candidates; all are incumbents except those whose names are followed by an asterisk. (Most phone numbers shown are home, not office, numbers.) Any member who wishes to run is welcome to declare his candidacy at any time until just before the voting takes place (Listed here are all the new candidates who declared themselves in response to the invitation in the Aug. News.)

I. All New England. Six directors.

Sat., Jan. 22, 1 PM, at Back Bay station (upstairs), Boston, on Dartmouth St. just south of Copley Square and the Turnpike.

Eugene K. Skoropowski, 24 Pine St., Melrose, MA 02176, 617/662-5677; William Ensign, III, 324 Little River Rd., Westfield 01085; William Hennessey, Box 235, Georgetown, ME 04548; C.N. Monaghan, 86 N. Main St., St. Albans, VT 05478; Samuel E. Stokes, Jr., Alstead, NH 03602; James M.S. Ullman, 95 E. Main St., Meriden, CT 06450, 203/237-8888.

II. New York State. Four directors.

Sat., Jan. 8, 11 AM, New York, in the conference room of American Heritage Publishing Co., 12th Floor, 10 Rockefeller Plaza (the Eastern Airlines Building).

Lettie Gay Carson, Carson Rd., Millerton 12546, 518/789-3353; Oliver Jensen, "American Heritage", 10 Rockefeller Plaza, N.Y. 10020, 212/399-8920; Henry Luce, III, Time & Life Building, N.Y. 10020; Rogers E.M. Whitaker, The New Yorker, 25 W. 43rd St., N.Y. 10036.

III. New Jersey, Delaware, E. Pennsylvania. Five Directors.

Sat., Jan. 8, 10 AM, at Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, 1519 JFK Blvd., 1½ blocks west of Suburban Station in downtown Philadelphia. Special guest speaker: Frank Rizzutto, Marketing Director of Amtrak's Northeast Corridor Region. The Delaware Valley Assn. of RR Passengers will meet at 1 PM.

Thomas C. Southerland, Jr., 282 Western Way, Princeton, NJ 08540, 609/924-5258; James F. Farny, 12 Squirrel Lane, Newark, DE 19711; Henry Harris, 575 E. Evergreen Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19118; Frank Panariello, III, 1705 Linden St., Wilmington, DE 19805; Dorothy D. Spivack, Cornerhouse, Far Hills, NJ 07931.

IV. Maryland, Virginia, D.C., West Virginia. Five directors.

Sat., Jan. 29, 10:30 AM, at the Silver Spring home of Lorena Lemons (directions available from NARP office. 202/546-1550).

Lorena F. Lemons, 1900 Snow Drop Lane, Silver Spring, Md. 20906, 301/933-6425; John T. Collier*, 4441 Verplanck Place, NW, Washington, DC 20016; Peter B. Bell, 1913 23rd St., NW, Washington, DC 20008; Terry Flaherty, Friends of the Railroad, P.O. Box 344, Rte. 1, Harpers Ferry, WV 25425; Joseph F. Horning, Jr., 8000 Parkside Lane, NW, Washington, DC 20012; George Tyson, 1825 North Forest Park Ave., Baltimore, MD 21207, 301/448-2362.

V. N.C., S.C., Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Eastern Louisiana. Four directors.

Sat., Jan. 15, 10:30 AM, Victoria Station Restaurant near the I-285/I-75N interchange on the north side of Atlanta, and adjacent to Cumberland Mall.

John R. Martin, P.O. Drawer 1734, Atlanta 30301, 404/355-1766; Charles A. Dunn*, 1131 Catalonia Ave., Coral Gables, FL 33134; Steven T. Evans*, 2124 Sound View Drive, Gautier, MS 39553; O.F. Hernandez-Campos*, 277-12 Corry Village, Gainesville, FL 32603; Lee E. McIlvaine, 90 Brookwood Rd., Jacksonville, FL 32207; Edwin

A DISAPPOINTING CONRAIL PERFORMANCE

Amtrak trains run by Conrail had a 53% on-time record during October. Only part of this dismal record can be explained by major trackwork. On Oct. 27, the "Lake Shore" arrived Boston two hours late. 50 minutes of that lateness resulted from two bad dispatching errors observed on the Springfield-Boston segment by one of the passengers, your editor.

On the other hand, latest figures show Conrail freights on the Amtrak-controlled NE Corridor 79% on-time.

P. Patton, 841 Cherokee Blvd., SW, Knoxville, TN 37919.

VI. Ohio, Western Pa., and Michigan. Five directors.

Sat., Feb. 19, 1:30 PM, Commodore Perry Hotel in downtown Toledo, Ohio. At 10:30 AM, there will be a joint meeting of Michigan and Ohio Associations of Railroad Passengers.

David S. Marshall, 1024-A Courtney Drive, Dayton, Ohio 45431 513/252-0481; John DeLora, 1649 Brys Drive, Grosse Pointe, MI 48236; Albert Mladineo, 4119 Brainerd Road, Chagrin Falls, OH 44022; James B. Stevenson, RD 1, Box 229 C, Youngsville, PA 16371; Ronald Vanderkooi*, 1509 Alexander S.E., Grand Rapids MI 49506; Robert G. Wickens, 637 N. Abbe Rd., Elyria, OH 44035

VII. Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin. Six directors.

Sat., Jan. 22, 10 AM, at the Midland Hotel, 172 W. Adams Chicago (about 5 blocks straight east from Union Station).

Lawrence Poston, 528 North Cuyler, Oak Park, IL 60302; Edward H. Bennett, Jr., 332 South Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60604; Ronald Peck Boardman, Jr., 338 Board of Trade, Chicago, IL 60604; William H. Bryan, 1901 Seminary St., Alton, IL 62002; George E. McCallum, Dept. of Economics, St. Norbert College, West DePere, WI 54178; Robert G. Moorhead, P.O. Box 1652, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

VIII. Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, N. & S. Dakota. Two directors.

Sun., Jan. 23, 1 PM, Roseville, MN, at the Rosedale Shopping Center on Rte. 36 — Fairview Ave. near I-35W (between Minneapolis and St. Paul).

Dan Lovegren, 1445 W. Shryer Ave., Roseville, MN 55113, 612/645-4202; Jack Ecker, 4200 Grand Ave., Des Moines, IA 50312, 515/255-7392.

IX. Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri and Western Louisiana. Three directors.

Sat., Jan. 22, 10 AM, in the English Room of the Baker Hotel in downtown Dallas. Special guest speaker: James Bryant, Dir. of Special Services for Amtrak's Public Affairs Dept. in Washington.

M.D. (Dan) Monaghan, P.O. Box 609, Garland, TX 75040, 214/276-5736; James R. Gough, 3025 Glen Haven Blvd., Houston, TX 77205, 713/667-3047; R.E. (Doc) Waters, Box 845, Wichita Falls, TX 76307, 817/855-2861.

X. Colorado, Wyoming, Utah. One director.

Sat., Jan. 8, 1 PM, Denver, Epiphany Lutheran Church on Downing St. near Washington Park.

G. Alvin Williams, Jr.*, 3065 S. Flamingo Way, Denver 80222.

XI. N. California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Alaska, Hawaii, and N. Nevada. Four directors.

Sat., Jan. 15, 10 AM, Marine Memorial Club, 609 Sutter St., San Francisco.

Arthur Lloyd, 20 Arapaho Court, Portola Valley, CA 94025, 415/851-0998; Robert W. Glover*, 832 Elizabeth St., San Francisco, CA 94114; Helen R. Nelson, 12897 Trinity Ave., Saratoga, CA 95070; Paul Phillips, West 444 21st, Spokane, WA 99203; Fred A. Stindt, 978 Emerald Hill Rd., Redwood City, CA 94061.

XII. So. California, So. Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico. Three directors.

Sat., Jan. 8, 1 PM, in the Garden Room East of the Los Angeles Hilton Hotel, 930 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles CA.

Philip K. Reiner-Deutsch, 161 South St. Andrews Place, #302, Los Angeles, CA 90004; Charles Montooth, Taliesin West, Scottsdale, AZ 85252; Alfred Runte, 109 Dearborn Pl. #74, Goleta, CA 93017, 805/967-5468.

Amtrak's Five-Year Plan

Required by law, Amtrak has submitted the up-dated version of its five-year corporate plan to Congress and the White House. The plan, among other things, spells out the allocation of a total of \$1.1 billion in federal capital grants over the five year period including \$208 million for 365 new single-level cars (1978-79) and \$130.5 million for 153 additional bi-level cars (1978-79). A total of \$1 billion would be spent on 144 new locomotives of varying types. Funds have also been earmarked for station and facility improvements and for a limited amount of track up-grading. The plan also includes revenue and cost projections for each route, and forecasts the amount of federal operating funds that will be required.

Regarding Amtrak budgetary requirements for the coming year, the plan assumes no substantial changes in the basic operating system or in national transportation policy. It sets forth,

Recognition of his work advocating sound rail service, Amtrak and Hudson Railway has named newly rebuilt locomotive #703 after NARP member Walter E. Zeh, of Greenburgh, N.Y. His work, D&H said, "epitomizes our philosophy that each man has a voice in government and he chooses to use it."

Projections as to what it will cost for Amtrak to continue to operate and improve its current routes and services, with only limited, incremental expansion of routes and services. Specifically, the plan assumes that the current basic operating system be maintained "with the addition of one experimental locomotive each year and two state supported 403(b) routes each year. The plan assumes that "at least one of the existing 38 routes will be considered for discontinuance or re-routing each

year by the Amtrak board applying the criteria approved by the Congress for this purpose." It assumes that any growth in Amtrak's services, with the exception of added Northeast corridor and 403(b) responsibilities, will be funded not by increased federal grants, but by increased earned revenues. Predictions of ridership increases are much more modest in this five-year plan than they were in the one submitted last year.

The plan, if nothing else, provides a lesson in the effects of inflation on the cost of providing a subsidized service. Inflation takes a particularly heavy toll on an operation where cost base greatly exceeds revenue base. Assuming a cost-inflation factor of approximately 7.5% and an annual fare increase of slightly less than 5% (selectively applied), and including projected revenue increases and cost decreases, Amtrak predicts that the net cost of inflation over F.Y. '77 needs will be \$41.6, \$79.1, \$118.5, and \$162.3 million for each year through 1981. Amtrak predicts that, were it not for the factor of inflation, its 1977 subsidy need of \$482 million would decrease by 1981 to \$395 million. Because of inflation, however, it will increase to \$566 million.

Steps could be taken to expand Amtrak's revenue base, thereby countering inflation, to some degree. Routes could be restructured and added to better serve existing population centers. Frequencies could be increased, increasing train miles and revenues while fixed facility and corporate costs remain the same. While acknowledging a possible need for such steps, the five-year plan does not seriously address these alternatives. It provides, instead, a sketch of what must be done to preserve the existing system, but neither argues nor shows that the present system is adequate.

The plan does not explicitly state, but nonetheless makes clear that there will be an increasing need for expanded Amtrak ridership, for an increased public awareness of the service Amtrak provides, and for a renewed and strengthened effort to remind members of Congress that people need and want the service and are willing, if the corporation is efficiently managed, to have public funds provided to meet deficits incurred.

NARP members should not fall prey to the illusion that the absence of Coleman-Barnum-style opposition will do away with the urgency of the latter effort. There is nothing like a clearly discernible villain to bolster support for the hero. Without the present Administration's constant demands for cuts in Amtrak funding, Amtrak supporters in Congress may begin to feel an increasing responsibility to ask for funding cuts themselves.

Mr. Reistrup, in his covering letter attached to the plan, observes: "The people want passenger train service preserved, and even expanded." This bit of news must be brought to the attention again and again of all state and federal officials, as well as local news media, chambers of commerce, and other concerned organizations.

OHIOANS — LETTERS, PLEASE!

Amtrak posted notices Nov. 15 indicating that the Cleveland-Youngstown commuter train will make its last run on Nov. 14. There are indications, however, that Ohio could receive the 100% Federal subsidy to which it is entitled through March 26.

If the train is lost, it would be virtually impossible to replace it. The uncertainty of oil prices over the next few years and the possibility of working out an extension of the contract to Pittsburgh with through cars off Amtrak, also require state action to obtain the funds.

Our letter urging state action to obtain the subsidy is in the hands of James Rhodes in Columbus, with a copy to the Ohio Department of Transportation, 250 E. Broad, Columbus

SPEAKING OF OIL PRICES. . .

U.S., once the world's largest producer of crude oil, is now the biggest single customer of the foreign oil cartel. . . . Multibillion dollar efforts to find and produce more oil off U.S. shores, the gap between domestic oil production and domestic oil needs continues to widen."

—The Wall Street Journal, Nov. 9

Gasoline consumption in the United States is expected to be 118.8 billion gallons in 1976, a 5.5% increase over 1975, the Federal Highway Administration has announced. "This would be the highest rate of consumption increase on record. . .," the administration said. "The use of motor fuel is expected to be 5.7% above 1975 compared with a 2.5% increase in 1975 over 1974."

—Traffic World, Nov. 15

Gasoline on the agenda. . . must be a progressive increase in the federal gasoline tax. Each one-cent increase. . . could raise \$1 billion dollars to the Treasury to finance improved highways. . . . adverse impact on low-income families could be mitigated with a system of rebates."

—John C. Sawhill, former Administrator of the Federal Energy Administration, on the Nov. 17 New York Times "op-ed" page

Capitol Disgrace — With Hope

Washington Union Station is less convenient than ever. Passengers must walk further between roadways and trains. Upper level tracks were pulled back to make room for the new station now in use north of the old building, which is now the National Visitors Center. (The FBI just began an investigation of Center contracts.)

Although the Dept. of Interior has agreed that control of the beautiful, newly-cleaned building should revert to DOT, it is not clear that the most crucial factor, walking distance to the trains, will be satisfactorily resolved.

Fortunately, one of the options included in a July FRA consultant report does call for putting the tracks back and restoring all passenger facilities to the original building. Says the report: "The removal of the replacement station not only will reduce the distance a passenger must walk to reach his train but also will simplify the terminal's layout and will remove from use an architecturally mediocre space which contrasts sharply in quality and character with the spaces of Union Station itself." NARP votes for "Alternative A-1"!

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NARP Board Meeting (cont. from p. 1)

Joseph V. MacDonald is an executive with Continental Can Company who, before his appointment to the Amtrak Board, played a key role in the citizens' effort to launch the "Montrealer". He gave generously of his time in speaking and in a lengthy question and answer session. He gave NARP 99% of the credit for the fact that intercity passenger trains still exist.

His primary message was a plea to help Amtrak fill the "\$100 million worth of unsold space" it carries during the nine "off-season" months. He thinks the slogan, "We're making the trains worth traveling again" is at last justified, and that today's Amtrak passenger has a 95% chance of having "a good comfortable trip." His contention was supported by NARP Director Paul Phillips, of Spokane, who has taken surveys on all Pacific Northwest trains and found an 85-90% positive response to the question: "Would you recommend the train to your friends or relatives?"

At the same time, MacDonald acknowledged that "we're nowhere near perfect", and told the group of the lengthy critical reports he sends to President Reistrup, at Reistrup's request, on problems he encounters on his frequent Amtrak trips.

He emphasized the importance of reducing the deficits to an "acceptable" level because "I don't think that the Congress is going to continue indefinitely" to provide the present level of subsidy. He believes this can be accomplished by increasing off-peak ridership and by increasing frequency of service, primarily on existing routes, since more than \$200 million of Amtrak's costs, he said, have "nothing to do with" trainmiles alone but are

NARP Directors Alfred Runte, of Goleta, Ca., and Samuel E. Stokes, Jr., of Alstead, N.H., have found wide audiences for their rail-related writings. Runte's article, "Blueprint for Comfort: A National Park-to-Park Railway", appeared in the November National Parks & Conservation Magazine. A Stokes column relating the energy crisis to transportation appeared in the July 31 Environmental Action, and in the Atlanta Journal.

incurred "as long as we're open for business". (One example was provided by President Reistrup in a September speech in Boston: the computer reservation system costs over \$25 million/year to operate.)

Mr. MacDonald welcomes letters and promises to read them all, but cautions that the high volume has forced him to abandon attempts to answer all of it. Send letters to 5306 N. Pueblo Ave., #214, Chicago 60656.

Subsequently, the NARP Board approved five resolutions in addition to the one concerning the South Shore Line, reported elsewhere in this issue.

One resolution urged the next President to "use his 'new broom' first on the Department of Transportation. We urge the quickest possible replacement of the leaders of DOT whose negative, foot-dragging approach to railroad needs generally and to AMTRAK in particular have delayed improvement of railroad tracks and roadbeds and of rail passenger service." (At presstime, rumors were widespread that Secretary of Transportation William T. Coleman, Jr., was making every effort to win reappointment.)

Two resolutions were directed at Amtrak. One urged retention of "all passenger cars which are roadworthy or could be made so with reasonable renovation" and expressed concern "about reported figures which suggest that Amtrak officials believe conversion costs to be far higher than some private firms believe."

The other urged that "Amtrak readjust the seating density in Amfleet coaches on runs of four hours or longer to 60 seats to increase the level of comfort" and that parlor car service be provided on such runs where it is not now offered.

Finally, the Board approved the establishment of a special committee, headed by Director John R. Martin of Atlanta, to develop route structure recommendations for the Board to consider.

Time prevented consideration of other resolutions, and the Board is now being polled by mail on these.

Election Reports

Of the Senators mentioned in our last issue, Vance Hartke (Ind.) and Robert Taft (R-O.) were defeated, and Lowell Weicker (R-Ct.) won reelection.

Nothing is certain, particularly in light of a possible mass Senate committee reorganization. It seems probable, however, that Sen. Adlai E. Stevenson III (D-Ill.) will be the new chairman of the Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Surface Transportation. Sen. Warren Magnuson (D-Wash.), who has always been supportive of Amtrak, would continue as chairman of the full Commerce Committee.

In Maryland, voters approved a referendum which will permit the use of state funds to improve railroad properties, a key step in securing a railroad/Metrorail intermodal station at Silver Spring. But Wisconsin voters defeated their rail/bus/ferry referendum (Sept. News).

At the annual meeting of Transportation Research Forum in Boston in Oct., NARP's Ross Capon joined Amtrak and other railroads representatives on a panel about Amtrak. Panel chairman Richard Michaels, of the U. of Ill. at Chicago's Circle Urban Systems Lab., presented some interesting statistics. Surveys conducted during the 1973 summer on a sample of Amtrak trains except New York-Washington revealed that 42% of the passengers were over 50 years of age, a higher figure than for any other mode, and that an average of 65% of the passengers were women.

The surveys were conducted for a 1974 General Accounting Office study which concluded that the Amtrak experiment should continue. Michaels noted that Amtrak represents a subsidy to a "unique subset" of the traveling public, similar in some respects to the Federal urban transit funds now flowing to improve accessibility to the handicapped.

U.S. POSTAL SERVICE STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION (Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685)			
1. TITLE OF PUBLICATION "News from National Association of Railroad Passengers"		2. DATE OF FILING 9/76	
3. FREQUENCY OF ISSUE Monthly except November		A. NO. OF COPIES PUBLISHED ANNUALLY 11	B. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION PRICE \$15 - base rate
4. LOCATION OF KNOWN OFFICE OF PUBLICATION (Street, City, County, State and ZIP Code) (Not printer) 417 New Jersey Ave., S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003			
5. LOCATION OF THE HEADQUARTERS OR GENERAL BUSINESS OFFICES OF THE PUBLISHERS (Not printers) Same as above			
6. NAMES AND COMPLETE ADDRESSES OF PUBLISHER, EDITOR, AND MANAGING EDITOR			
PUBLISHER (Name and Address) Green Realty, same address as #4			
EDITOR (Name and Address) Ross Capon, same address as #4			
MANAGING EDITOR (Name and Address)			
7. OWNER (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, its name and address, as well as that of each individual must be given.)			
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2. MAIL SUBSCRIPTIONS		4,343	4,434
C. TOTAL PAID CIRCULATION (Sum of B1 and B2)		4,343	4,434
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F. COPIES NOT DISTRIBUTED 1. OFFICE USE, LEFT OVER, UNACCOUNTED, SPOILED AFTER PRINTING		1,467	1,734
2. RETURNS FROM NEWS AGENTS		None	None
G. TOTAL (Sum of E, F1 and F2—should equal net press run shown in A)		6,887	7,200
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