



News from the  
**National Association  
of Railroad Passengers**

Second Class Postage Paid  
At Washington, D.C.

Vol. 24, No. 9  September, 1990

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

News from the National Association of Railroad Passengers (ISSN 0739-3490), is published monthly except November by NARP, 900 Second St., NE, Suite 308, Washington, DC 20002. 202/408-8362. Membership dues are \$20/year (\$10.00 under 21 or over 65) of which \$5 is for a subscription to NARP News. Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC.

**Postmaster:** send address changes to National Association of Railroad Passengers, 900 Second St., NE, Suite 308, Washington, DC 20002.

(This has news through October 9. No. 8 was mailed Sept. 4.)

RETURN REQUESTED

# U.S. Dependence on Cheap Oil Weakens Economy, Encourages War

## Europe, Japan Benefit from Big Gasoline Taxes, Great Public Transport

"We're gas guzzlers. That's the problem, said Paul Horne, an American who is chief international economist for Smith Barney International in Paris.

"Europeans have always relied less on cars than Americans . . . [and] bought fewer, more gas-efficient cars. Many governments developed extensive train systems.

"Western Europe was still hit hard economically by the energy crises of 1973-74 and 1978-80. But when gas prices started falling, many governments kept them artificially high through taxation, aiming in part to cut consumption.

"Thus, even though many Western Europeans are as wealthy as Americans, they don't buy cars that are as big or use them as much."  
—The Phila. Inquirer, Aug. 31 news story

"While the United States waits fearfully for the real impact of the Persian Gulf to be felt . . . , Europe [is] relatively calm in the face of higher oil prices . . . . Several radical changes in the European business climate since the early 1980s should allow Europe to outperform the United States, and perhaps keep up with Japan, in any troubled waters ahead.

"Most obviously, Europe is less dependent on oil than the United States, and has cut that dependence strongly over the past two decades. The 12 European Community states needed 21.7 barrels of oil per capita in 1988, far less than the American diet of 54.6 [due partly] to higher taxes on gasoline and oil in Europe.

"This crisis is quite different from the one in 1973, and the essential point is the controlled consumption of energy," said Herve Gouletquer, chief economist of Banque Populaire in Paris."  
—The Washington Post, Sep. 9 news story

"Oil prices soared from about \$18 a barrel [before the invasion of Kuwait] to last week's \$32 a barrel. A recent report

from analysts at Kidder, Peabody & Co. [said]: 'If oil remains above \$30 a barrel, a recession [in the U.S.] will begin in the fourth quarter and last through the first half of 1991 . . . . If oil prices retreat to about \$25 a barrel, the economy will continue to sustain a slow-growth pattern.'"

—The Washington Post, Sep. 17 news story

"The U.S. is facing major energy problems from the Kuwait-Iraq conflict partly because of the Reagan-Bush administration's 'systematic dismantling' of President Carter's energy policies, [Senate Budget Chairman] Jim Sasser (D-TN), said . . . . He said the country should invest in high-speed trains as the mass-transit transportation of the future. Instead of relying on airlines burning jet fuel, he said, 'people going from Knoxville to Nashville could board a high-speed train that could make the run in excess of 100 mph and it would be less energy intensive.'"

—The Knoxville News-Sentinel, Aug. 8 news story

In Europe and Japan—where gasoline taxes generally exceed \$2 a gallon vs. 25.8 cents here—recent worldwide oil price increases have had relatively little impact. The U.S. economy, meanwhile, anxiously awaits an oil-price rollback.

(continued on page 4)

### BUDGET SUMMIT = BALANCED TRANSPORTATION!

The budget summit agreement President Bush strongly supported in his Oct. 2 address includes highway fuel and aviation tax increases, with half of the former and all of the latter going to deficit reduction rather than further investment in facilities for transportation modes that waste energy and destroy the environment. (Highway and aviation interests were lobbying furiously against this good policy.) Meanwhile, domestic discretionary spending—including Amtrak and transit—fared well. But the budget resolution enacted Oct. 9 was a "framework" that left "details" of interest to us in the hands of congressional committees.

## U.S. Out-of-Step: Gasoline Too Cheap, Too Much Gasoline Tax Money Builds More Roads

Thanks to the Persian Gulf crisis, the media has done a fair job of educating Americans about how cheap our gasoline prices are compared with prices abroad (see table below). But few have noticed how much more of our gasoline tax payments go to build more roads.

Whereas virtually all U.S. road taxes are spent on such construction, only 25% of road fees are so devoted in the Netherlands and Great Britain; only 1/3 in most other European countries, according to U.S. DOT's *National Transportation Strategic Planning Study* (Mar., 1990).

### Gasoline Prices per gallon (regular leaded on Aug. 25)

Italy	\$4.92	Belgium	\$3.80
Sweden	\$4.85	Tokyo, Japan *	\$3.76
Denmark	\$4.46	Portugal	\$3.76
France	\$4.37	England	\$3.56
Netherlands	\$4.21	Greece	\$3.23
Dublin, Ireland *	\$4.15	Spain	\$3.14
Norway	\$4.10	West Germany	\$3.05
Switzerland	\$3.87	U.S. *	\$1.274

\* (Source: Associated Press, in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Aug. 31; except AAA for U.S.—self-service regular unleaded on Aug. 24; and Sep. 24 Runzheimer International release for Dublin and Tokyo—least expensive gasoline available in Sep. Runzheimer, of Rochester, WI, also listed 9 cities with prices under \$1 a gallon, all in third world oil-producing nations.) ■

### COURT TO HEAR PLEA TO BLOCK ROAD CONSTRUCTION

"In a move that could freeze Bay Area highway construction, environmentalists asked a federal judge yesterday to block major new freeway projects until regional authorities devise a better way to calculate their impact on air quality.

"The Sierra Club and other groups asked Judge Thelton Henderson, with the U.S. District Court in San Francisco, to stop 4 big road-building projects approved in recent months and bar any future construction 'that would increase existing highway capacity.' . . .

"The motion, which is likely to be taken up by the judge in about a month, is an attempt by the environmentalists to capitalize on earlier victories in their 15-month court battle with state and regional officials. . . .

"Henderson ruled in May that the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, which by law is supposed to assess the air pollution effects of highway projects before financing them, was taking a 'cursory approach' that amounted to a 'pointless exercise.'

"In the motion filed yesterday, the environmentalists contend that until the commission comes up with an alternative method for analyzing the effects of pollution that is acceptable to the judge, it cannot approve projects that make room for more cars on Bay Area highways.

"'MTC has continued to approve projects as fast as they could,' said Bill Curtiss, an attorney with the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund. 'They should have come up with a new process, but they haven't. They've dared the rest of the world to do something about it, so we're trying.' . . ."

—San Francisco Chronicle, Sep. 25 news story

### TRANSIT: BUSH NO, HOUSE REPUBLICANS YES

Transit wasn't even mentioned when President Bush's energy and transportation secretaries kicked off a public-service advertising campaign to promote fuel conservation. But, in late September, Republicans on the House Energy & Commerce Committee led by Norman Lent (NY) "moved out in front of the White House by introducing sweeping energy legislation [including] tax incentives to business to encourage use of public transportation" (*The Washington Post*, October 4).

The program promoted by Secretary of Energy James Watkins urges "Americans to check their tire pressure. Watkins claimed that proper tire inflation could save the U.S. 50,000 barrels of oil a day. Other measures that will be urged in the ad campaign include driving slower, car-pooling, using the lowest possible octane for cars and driving the most efficient car in 2-car families . . . 'Every American is asking themselves what they can do to contribute in this period of crisis,' said Transportation Secretary Samuel K. Skinner as he introduced the ad campaign's slogan, 'Do your part—Drive smart'" (*The Boston Herald*, Sep. 14 news story). They unveiled the ad campaign at the National Association of Broadcasters' convention in Boston Sep. 13.

Fortunately, H.R. 5735, the Energy & Commerce Republicans' broad energy initiative, includes a provision that would raise from \$15 to \$60 a month the value of transit fares an employer can give employees tax-free. Rep. Robert T. Matsui (D-CA) and House Ways & Means staffers were working on including a similar provision in the budget summit agreement. And Secretary Watkins responded to the Republican initiative by promising that the long-awaited National Energy Strategy he will submit to the White House in December will emphasize conservation.

### F-69's Now Being Road Tested



—Photo by Wis. ARP

Amtrak's 2 new General Motors F-69 diesel-electric locomotives left the Federal Railroad Administration's test center at Pueblo, CO on Sept. 5, after a year of testing. F-69's use a.c. motor technology (F-40's use d.c.), which may save Amtrak a lot in maintenance. They are prototypes of a projected F-70's series, that will replace the aging F-40 fleet. F-69 #451 is shown above at Sturtevant, WI Sep. 9 on train 337, a Chicago-Milwaukee "Hiawatha," in "push" mode. F-69 #451 is visible just beyond the GM test car. The units left for Los Angeles on the "Southwest Chief" Sep. 13 and were to tour the West for 30 days. ■

## TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

Great news about services to be added or restored Oct. 28! A 2nd "San Diegan" will serve Santa Barbara. Chicago-Detroit will recover its 3rd daily round-trip for the first time since Jan., 1986, when one frequency was reduced to Fri./Sat./Sun. only. New York-Boston will get 2 daily frequencies that make the run in less than 4 hours. Atlantic City gains direct Hartford/Springfield service.

"Cardinal" will begin serving Connersville, IN. "Desert Wind" will begin serving Victorville, CA. The Olympia, WA stop will move from East Olympia to Yelm Highway in Lacey. The westbound midweek "Cardinal" will run a day later, departing New York Wednesday, not Tuesday.

On the negative side, an hour is added to the "California Zephyr"/"Pioneer"/"Desert Wind" schedule from Winter Park to Denver, creating a 5 AM departure from Seattle. NARP has protested this, in light of increased speed limits implemented Aug. 1 between Denver and Salt Lake City. Amtrak is studying rerouting "Pioneer" next year via Wyoming and Denver (with provision for Salt Lake City traffic), allowing "Pioneer" to depart Seattle as late as 8 AM.

More bad news: Grand Forks-Winnipeg and Des Moines-Omaha bus connections will be dropped Oct. 28. The proposed Atlanta-Macon-Savannah "Ambus" is "officially dead" due to difficulties at the Atlanta station. Due to Burlington Northern staff cuts, Amtrak stations at Malta and Wolf Point, MT have been staffed weekdays only since Aug. 20; no baggage or express on weekends. Amtrak de-staffed Wildwood, FL Aug. 7. NARP and Florida Coalition of Rail Passengers have asked Amtrak to staff Kissimmee, FL instead.

Reroutes of the "Broadway" and "Capitol" were postponed to Nov. 11.

The "Capitol" reroute means Amtrak will, for the first time, serve the Cleveland-Washington and Cleveland-Pittsburgh markets and, via "Ambus" connections at Toledo, the Detroit-Washington and Detroit-Pittsburgh markets. The Michigan "Ambus" will also serve Dearborn, Ann Arbor, and East Lansing.

These stops will be new to the "Capitol": Alliance, Cleveland, and Toledo, OH; Waterloo ("Lake Shore" will not stop here) and South Bend, IN. "Capitol" will use the same Cleveland-Chicago route as "Lake Shore" but will not stop at Elyria, Sandusky, and Bryan, OH, and Elkhart, IN.

These are new to the "Broadway": Youngstown, Akron, and Fostoria, OH and Garrett and Nappanee, IN.

Of the 7 stations new to the Amtrak system, only Youngstown and Akron will be staffed and neither will have checked baggage service.

These stations will lose train service due to the reroute: Canton, Crestline and Lima, OH; and Fort Wayne and Warsaw, IN. Fort Wayne will continue to have a ticket office and checked baggage service, using feeder buses to/from "Capitol's" Waterloo and "Broadway's" Garrett stops. Valparaiso, IN, will lose intercity service but retain the "Calumet" commuter train through Dec. 31, when Amtrak plans to discontinue it absent state or local funding.

"Capitol" will stop at McKeesport, PA, for another 6 months. This late decision will be reflected in Amtrak's

regional timetable but not the national.

(See also "Reroutes" box below, and our initial report on the reroute in Dec '89 News.)

TRANSIT: MBTA's Providence line began serving South Attleboro, MA, July 30 (NARP News, May, p. 3). San Jose light rail extension to Tamien (formerly Alma), 2 mi., opened Aug. 17. Downtown Long Beach loop of Los Angeles Blue light rail line opened Sep. 1. Washington Metro Red Line opened to Forest Glen and Wheaton, MD, Sep. 22.

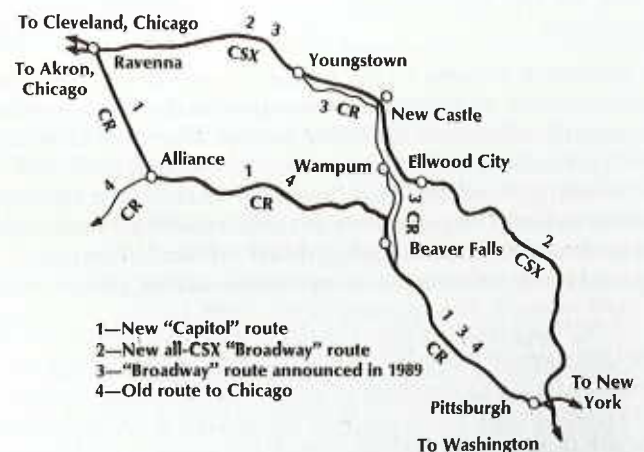
## REROUTES OFF TO VERY SLOW START

	Rail Mileage	Running-time	Speed
Cleveland-Pittsburgh ("Capitol Ltd.")	139	3:25 east	41 mph
		3:18 west	42 mph
Pittsburgh-Youngstown ("Broadway Ltd.")	74	2:45 east	27 mph
		2:28 west	30 mph

These pathetic running-times—and middle-of-the-night timings—mean Amtrak will have little market impact here, but "the foot is in the door." The next step may be faster daylight service, including extension of "Pennsylvanian" to Cleveland (eventually via Youngstown) as NARP and Ohio ARP have long urged. And the long-distance trains themselves should be speeded up.

For now, "Capitol" must observe Conrail's freight train speed limits between Alliance and Cleveland (56 miles, including 30 miles at 60 mph and 18 miles at 50 mph). "Broadway" will use CSX (ex-B&O) from Indiana all the way to Pittsburgh, with a back-up move into Amtrak's Pittsburgh station eastbound, out of the station westbound. This approach to Pittsburgh is slow due to grades and curves; most B&O passenger trains abandoned this segment (in favor of Pittsburgh & Lake Erie trackage) decades before Amtrak. Alternate routes that could support much faster Pittsburgh-Youngstown service require track improvements and direct connections no one has yet agreed to fund.

Amtrak needs 2 key Conrail-B&O track connections: at New Castle, PA, to speed up Pittsburgh-Youngstown service; at Ravenna, OH, to permit Youngstown-Cleveland service.



—NARP Graphics/Scott Leonard

## DEPENDENCE ON CHEAP OIL (continued from page 1)

Perhaps this time, U.S. policymakers will be more receptive to our cries for long-term solutions—such as European countries adopted since the 1970s—that will help the nation face oil crises 10 years hence rather than limiting action to band-aids that merely help us limp through the presumed end of the present crisis.

For those who agree with us that U.S. transportation policy must change drastically, the transportation aspects of the budget summit agreement and President Bush's support for that agreement were encouraging. Unfortunately, President Bush—through his longstanding failure to support conservation enthusiastically (see quotations below)—is partly responsible for the strength of opposition to that agreement.

The U.S. has not been served well by endless quarrels among politicians over the relatively small amounts of public money we spend on intercity and urban rail passenger services. The Reagan and Bush administrations were invariably on the wrong side in these quarrels, which took place while Europeans invested furiously in such service.

As we write, the nation seems to be drifting towards the war of which environmentalists have been warning for many years. Whatever one believes about the full rationale for this drift, it is clear that U.S. dependence on "cheap" oil (that is rapidly becoming very expensive oil) is a big factor.

Fortunately, others are making our case. Here are more examples, preceeded by statements of President Bush and Secretary Baker:

President Bush: "Our jobs, our way of life, our own freedom and the freedom of friendly countries around the world would all suffer if control of the world's greatest oil reserves fell into the hands of that one man—Saddam Hussein."

Secretary of State James Baker: "We might plunge into a new dark age."  
—Quoted in *The Washington Post*, Sep. 2

"And yesterday, Bush mentioned energy conservation only after a reporter raised the issue, and even then the president seemed to waiver: 'I think we ought to conserve at a time like this. On the other hand, we're doing everything we can to guarantee that Americans don't panic and that there will be an adequate supply of hydrocarbons.'

"But I think it is a good time to conserve, so I'm glad you reminded me of that and I would call upon Americans to conserve. And I think that doesn't mean life screeches to a halt, and therefore I would say that. But I also think we're going to be able to guarantee an adequate supply of petroleum."  
—*The Boston Globe*, Aug. 23 news story

"I think it is time to go to the source of our problem: consumption. At almost one month into this crisis, I still see thousands of people speeding to and from work, alone in their cars. Car-pool; bike; walk; take the T [ed.: MBTA's nickname]; do whatever is necessary to decrease consumption of oil and dependency on oil. It baffles me that only recently did President Bush publicly address this issue."

—Kevin Eagar of Cambridge, Letter to *The Boston Globe*, published Aug. 28

"America's more-than-50% dependence on imported foreign petroleum is the basic reason for President Bush's strong reaction to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and his deployment of American armed forces to the Persian Gulf area, with attendant risk of young American lives. If this country had followed a more realistic transportation policy directed toward a balanced transportation system including a large network of

efficient, electrified railroads, loss of foreign oil would not be such a potential disaster for the nation . . . .

"All during the Reagan years, the Office of Management and Budget fought tooth and toenail to see AMTRAK destroyed . . . . Every GARP member who wants a better future for America should take pen and paper and write to elected senators and representatives to point out that the U.S. desperately needs a transportation policy which promotes all—not just some—forms of transportation . . . ."

—*Georgia Assn. of RR Passengers Newsletter*, Sep.

"In general, businesses tend to support whatever taxes they don't pay," said a leading business economist, who asked to remain unidentified.

"An exception is Paul H. O'Neill, chairman of Aluminum Co. of America (Alcoa), who shocked many industrial leaders by calling publicly in June for a federal energy tax of between \$40 bill. and \$50 bill. a year. That would translate into a \$10-per-barrel tax on oil consumption, or a 40-cent-per-gallon increase in gasoline . . . .

"O'Neill argues that an energy tax would have the multiple benefits of raising revenue, discouraging energy consumption and protecting the environment. 'There are so many different ways that an energy tax makes sense that it's only unfortunate that we haven't had it for the last 15 years,' O'Neill said in an interview."

—*The Washington Post*, Sep. 9 news story

"In 4 years, U.S. . . . [oil] imports have almost doubled and are now approaching 9 mill. barrels per day. Next year our oil import bill will be \$75 bill. On our present trends our oil import bill in the mid-'90s will be well over \$100 bill.—and we would be importing 10 to 11 million barrels a day (if it were available).

"Energy policy has been drifting for a decade. Indeed, we have had a de facto policy—of growing dependence on the Gulf and on OPEC."

—James Schlesinger (former defense secretary, energy secretary, and director of the CIA) in *The Washington Post*, Aug. 5

"The world is now going through the third in what is obviously a continuing series of oil crises and disruptions. The countries that foresee these swings in supplies and prepare for them will sail through them with little damage. Those that lack the political courage to think ahead will continue to pay heavily."

—*The Washington Post*, Sep. 28 editorial

"Korea and Vietnam were wars that initially sounded 'right' to Cold War America. Whether protecting access to Mideast oil would play as well as the Red card did in Korea and Vietnam is an open question: 'Going to your death for stable oil prices might be difficult for the public to accept,' [John] Mueller [professor of political science at the University of Rochester and author of the groundbreaking book, 'War, Presidents and Public Opinion'] argues. 'He died for \$25-a-barrel-oil—you don't put that on somebody's tombstone.'"

—Richard Morin, Director of Polling, *The Washington Post*, Sep. 2

"The first substantive challenge to [Bush's and Baker's assertions quoted above] was made last week . . . by an energy economist, David R. Henderson, who served on President Reagan's Council of Economic Advisers. His dissent . . . is an argument that the press . . . has not adequately explored. Instead, the tendency among columnists and editorial writers has been to articulate reasons for going to war that neither Mr. Bush nor Mr. Baker has publicly advanced."

—Richard Harwood, *Washington Post* ombudsman, Sep. 2