



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

Vol. 25, No. 3  April, 1991

Second Class Postage Paid  
At Washington, D.C.

**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 April 26. No. 3 was mailed March 16.)

RETURN REQUESTED

# Major Rail Link Push

## Campaign Releases Four Policy Papers

*"The Campaign for New Transportation Priorities is making a major contribution to the development of a sound national transportation policy by raising issues and proposing specific recommendations. I particularly endorse and support the recommendation, also made by the administration, that no changes be made to permit heavier or longer combination trucks on the Interstate system."*

—Rep. Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY)  
at Campaign's March 6 news conference

The Campaign for New Transportation Priorities, which NARP initiated and which now includes 37 organizations, released its first four policy papers at a well-attended March news conference in the main hearing room of the House Committee on Public Works and Transportation.



Rep. Boehlert

At the conference, Committee Member Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY) told reporters "national transportation policy won't be made this time around without full consideration of other related policies, especially environmental preservation, energy conservation, local economic development, and travel and tourism. . . ."

"Federal transportation programs must rely far more heavily on expanded public transit funding. Expanded and improved transit will move people more efficiently, decrease congestion, reduce dependence on foreign energy; and by decreasing auto emissions, make a major contribution to reaching the goals of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990."

Other speakers at the news conference: Louis J. Gambacini, General Manager, Southeastern Pennsylvania Transp. Authority; NARP's Harriet Parcels, Campaign Project Dir.; Hal Hiemstra of Scenic America; Andy Clarke of the Bicycle Federation of America; Michael Replogle of the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy; and NARP Exec. Dir.

(continued on page 3)

## Support Grows for Boston Central Artery Rail Link

### NARP Board Reaffirms Support

*"If the North-South Stations railroad link isn't built now, in the future when we have true high speed Boston-New York trains and rail is a much bigger factor in passenger travel, Boston will become a backwater town consigned to be bypassed as regional transportation systems are developed."*

—NARP Member Guy D. Rosmarin,  
Consultant and Former Mass. Asst.  
Secretary of Transportation  
to Gov. Francis W. Sargent (R)

A major effort is underway to realize a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to integrate Maine, New Hampshire, and Boston's northern suburbs with the high-speed Northeast Corridor service and Amtrak's national system, and to unite the two separate Massachusetts commuter rail networks.

#### WHY NO AMTRAK IN MAINE?



—Spring '91 Amtrak Timetable

The goal is to insure that a cross-Boston railroad link is funded along with a \$5 billion highway project, the "Central Artery (I-93)/Tunnel (I-90) Project" (CA/T). Such a link would extend the Amtrak national system to Portland and other Maine points.

Late last year, the NARP Board passed a resolution reaffirming the board's 1983 position that the huge Boston project should go forward only if it includes a railroad link between North and South Stations (see box on page 2).

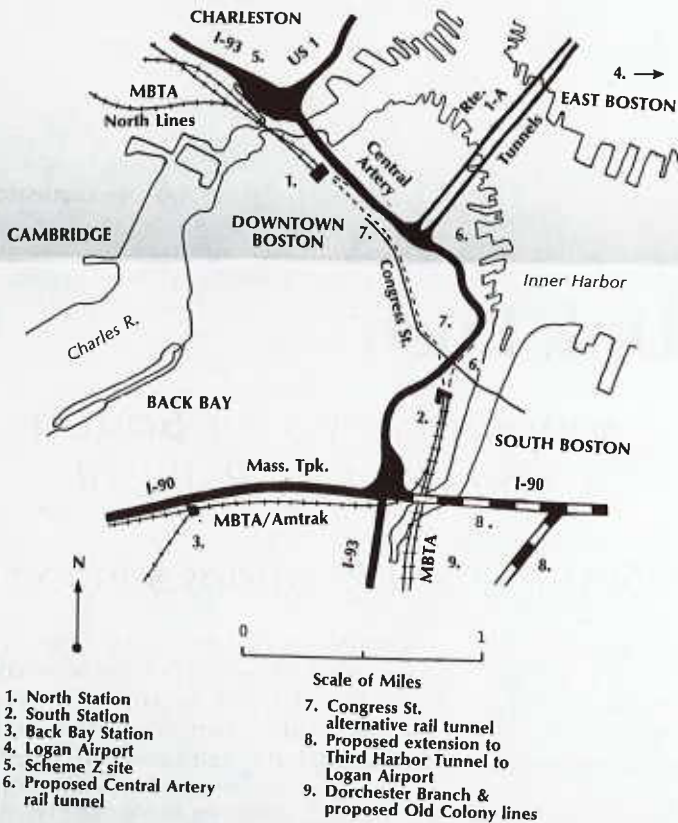
1983 position that the huge Boston project should go forward only if it includes a railroad link between North and South Stations (see box on page 2).

In Boston in March, Secretary of Transp. Samuel K. Skinner announced qualified White House support for federal funding of the CA/T, which includes:

- the widening and depression of the "Central Artery," the elevated freeway between North and South Stations;
- creation of the world's tallest highway interchange above the Charles River, the controversial "Scheme Z"; and
- construction of a 3rd highway tunnel linking downtown Boston with Logan International Airport.

There is no federal support for a package of environmental

**CENTRAL ARTERY PROJECT AREA**



—Scott Leonard/NARP Graphics

"mitigation" measures the Dukakis administration had said was necessary.

Rail passenger supporters think a cross-town railroad link must be funded now as part of the CA/T package if the link is ever to happen, particularly since it would be physically impossible to go back and put such a link into the most logical alignment—the Central Artery—after the Artery is depressed.

**Another Alignment?:** Even if another alignment should prove more viable, the single-package funding approach is needed to avoid the huge political difficulties associated with Boston's returning to Washington later for another big project.

Indeed, as a result of pro-rail-link agitation, the Massachusetts Bay Transp. Auth. (MBTA) is looking—albeit for construction 30 to 40 years hence!—at a rail link that would go under Congress St. and have subsurface stations at both North and South Stations and at a mid-town location (a good idea also possible with a Central Artery alignment).

**An Airport/Railroad Link:** The 1990 NARP resolution also supports linking the Amtrak mainline and MBTA commuter rail network to Logan International Airport, consistent with the administration's interest in "intermodality." The potential exists to extend such a line north to Maine by looping back (through Chelsea and Everett just north of Boston) to MBTA's Haverhill-Portland route if the extension is part of the pro-

**NARP's Second Rail Link Resolution**

The NARP Board of Directors approved the following resolution late in 1990. (The Board's 1983 resolution was in Dec. '83 News, p. 2. Other Central Artery stories: Aug. '83, Apr. and July '84, Apr. '88 and June '90.)

"WHEREAS the Commonwealth of Massachusetts plans to begin construction soon on depression of the Boston Central Artery and on a 3rd tunnel linking Boston with Logan International Airport, both projects as now envisioned to include highways only; and

"WHEREAS the board of directors of the National Association of Railroad Passengers in 1983 conditioned its support for depressing the Central Artery on inclusion in the project of a railroad connection which would permit through passenger train service between lines radiating south of Boston and lines radiating north of Boston; and

"WHEREAS plans for such a rail connection through Boston have been presented and advocated by business, civil and political leadership in 1909, 1947, and 1972; and

"WHEREAS a 1975 preliminary engineering study found such a rail connection to be technically feasible; and

"WHEREAS business, civic and political leadership in northern New England has encouraged such action to achieve fast through passenger train operation from northern New England to New York and points south via Boston and Providence; and

"WHEREAS the rail connection would also permit vastly improved commuter rail service; and

"WHEREAS inclusion of a railroad connection in the new airport tunnel would dramatically improve intermodal connections between air service on the one hand and Amtrak and commuter rail services on the other and might also serve as part of a New Hampshire/Maine—Logan Airport—Amtrak Shore Line link;

"THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the National Association of Railroad Passengers reaffirms its 1983 position in support of a direct railroad connection as part of the Central Artery depression through Boston from the Providence/Back Bay/South Station Shore Line to northern New England and the Boston suburbs served out of North Station and, further, supports inclusion of a railroad link as part of the new airport tunnel;

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that NARP urges Congress to condition funding for the Central Artery/Tunnel Project upon inclusion of these railroad links in the overall project concurrently with construction of the highways; and

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NARP Board directs NARP staff to take any and all practicable actions, including legal if necessary, to make these railroad links a reality."

posed highway tunnel to Logan.

**Recent Developments:** The news conference at South Station which NARP organized in June, 1990, helped galvanize support for inclusion of the rail link (June '90 News, p. 2). On Sep. 27, NARP's Ross Capon participated in a second pro-rail-link news conference at South Station—this one organized by the Boston-based Committee for Regional Transportation with the support of a professional public relations firm. Other speakers included Prof. Vukan Vuchic, a noted transit expert, and representatives of the Boston Area Bicycling Coalition, the

Massachusetts Chapter of the Sierra Club (16,000 members), and Greenpeace.

NARP Dir. Andreas Aeppli has helped keep the rail link issue alive, partly by making presentations to and observing a state panel studying Scheme Z, and the rail link. NARP Member Leonard Singer, an attorney, also has provided invaluable *pro bono* legal assistance.

CRT, NARP and others are challenging the highway-only CA/T under the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Act, meeting this law's tight deadline for filing suit so far at no cost

### CA/T "MOST COMPLEX SINCE PYRAMIDS"

**Boston's Central Artery/Tunnel Project "may well be the most complex public works project since the Pyramids at least."**

—Federal Highway Administrator Thomas D. Larson at March 21 National Press Club panel broadcast on C-Span II

to NARP. However, most observers believe the strongest challenge may come under the new federal Clean Air Act (Mar. News). This is being discussed and may require NARP funding.

#### What You Can Do

- Urge your legislators to see that the highway/transit reauthorization Congress is now considering conditions funding of the CA/T on its redesign to include a North-South Stations railroad link, something whose need would be taken for granted in Europe and Japan. Tell them you think that, because of the rail project's importance to the national rail passenger system, any Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1991 should include separate funding for the rail link.

- Help support legal challenges to the all-highway CA/T. Send your earmarked contributions to NARP payable to NARP and write "Boston Legal Fund" on the memo line. Please send these checks to the NARP office. We will refund checks if no action develops.

Send NARP an s.a.s.e. and check requesting either or both of the following: more detail on CA/T-related developments; our Apr. 8 comments on the state's "Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement"; and Prof. Vuchic's five-page paper, "Will Boston Miss an Historic Opportunity to Obtain a Regional Rail System?" (\$1 per item.) ■

### AMTRAK ORDERS DOUBLE-DECK CARS!

Amtrak ordered 140 Superliners, delivery to start in mid-1993. Correction: old "Super" sleepers have—and 49 of the 55 new ones will have—14 economy rooms (not 12). More details soon.

### COMMUTER RAIL ARRIVAL, DEPARTURE

Caltrain added a weekday limited-stop reverse—commute train April 1—dp. San Francisco 6:50a; dp. San Jose 4:55p.

Last trips for Amtrak's "Calumet" Valparaiso-Chicago commuter train will be May 3; state or local funding is not forthcoming although the Northern Indiana Commuter Transp. District says it favors starting service on the roughly parallel Grand Trunk Western line . . . at a later time.

### FRIENDS OF BOISE

In reporting that Amtrak trains will stay in Boise (Mar. News, p. 2), we noted news releases of Reps. Larry LaRocco and Richard Stallings (both D-ID) and the role they played in increasing public indignation at Amtrak's plans. Sens. Larry Craig and Steve Symms (both R-ID) and Boise Mayor Dirk Kempthorne also issued releases.

### Policy Papers (from page 1)

Ross Capon.

Speakers summarized the released papers, whose topics were Urban and Suburban Transportation (16 pages); Transportation and Tax Policy (12 pages); New Directions in Transportation Research and Development (12 pages); and Intercity Freight Transportation (8 pages).

The papers have gone to all Members of Congress and many other policy makers and reporters. You may order papers for \$5 each (\$4 each if four or more are ordered), postage paid (please specify which paper(s) you want!).

Intercity rail passenger concerns are addressed in some of the above-mentioned papers and of course will figure more prominently in a forthcoming paper on intercity passenger transportation.

The urban/suburban paper recommends, among other things:

- giving "state and local governments greater flexibility to use [federal] highway dollars for mass transit, ridesharing, bicycling and intercity passenger rail projects";
- requiring states to "submit a Transportation Demand Management Plan to the Federal DOT for each Metropolitan Planning Organization region to ensure the best and most efficient use of Federal transportation resources" and;
- "federal investment in mass transit . . . no less than \$6.5



At right, Campaign Project Dir. Harriet Parcels speaks at news conference. Above, all speakers are shown during question period. From left: Messrs. Hiemstra, Capon and Gambaccini; Ms. Parcels; Moderator Phil Sparks of Communications Consortium; and Messrs. Clarke and Replogle.



bill. in 1992"; it should "rise to \$11 bill. in 1996."

The tax policy paper urges:

- "a substantial increase in the Federal gasoline tax, on the order of \$1 a gallon" to encourage Americans to drive less, with revenues earmarked for "mass transit, ridesharing and bicycle facilities and intercity passenger rail improvements";
- peak period congestion charges for use of highways, air, and transit;
- creating a "level playing field" in federal tax treatment of employer-provided parking and transit benefits;
- allowing "Federal contractors to be reimbursed for employee transit as well as parking costs"; and
- enactment of a national weight-distance tax on big trucks.

Among the research paper's recommendations: by 1995, at least 5% of Highway Trust Fund spending should go to

research, development, and demonstration projects of all modes, with at least half of this money "dedicated to work on . . . public transportation, bicycling, walking, intercity passenger rail, traffic calming, land use/transportation relationships and transportation demand management."

The paper also states "U.S. fascination with magnetically levitated high speed rail technology (MAGLEV) should not overshadow the remarkable results achieved by traditional rail systems in Europe and Japan. Upgrading track and electrification projects in key Amtrak corridors could produce similar results to those achieved in Europe at lower cost and more quickly than could MAGLEV."

The intercity freight paper expands on the concept of imposing a national weight-distance tax on big trucks, and urges Congress to "oppose any increases in truck sizes and weights. . . . A recent study of rail and truck market share concluded that unrestricted use of twin 48 trucks has the potential to virtually eliminate railroads from the manufactured goods markets. Calculations by the Association of American Railroads similarly found massive diversion of freight and loss of rail revenues if twin 48's are legalized: 8% of rail ton-miles and 41% of net revenues." ■

"Federal Railroad Administrator Gilbert Carmichael noted recently that the nation's freight railroad system is currently being utilized at only roughly one-quarter of its capacity. Enactment of policies that promote diversion of freight away from rail and toward trucks will result in further under-utilization of rail infrastructure and erode rail economies of scale. . . . A 10% increase in rail traffic volume causes a 2% decrease in average total rail transportation costs."

—CNTF Policy Paper  
"Intercity Freight Transportation"

### LATE FLASH!!: Progress in Flexibility

Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY) on April 25 unveiled his highway/transit reauthorization, under which \$45 billion over five years (half of the funds the bill provides) could be used for surface transportation including "capital and operating costs for mass transit, rail and magnetic levitation systems including expenditures on rights-of-way and associated facilities."

This appears to open the way for use of highway trust funds on Amtrak-related projects. Because of the expected strong opposition to this concept, please be sure to tell your legislators you support it.

Moynihan is chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Water Resources, Transportation and Infrastructure. His bill also earmarks \$750 million in highway trust funds over five years for magnetic levitation.

Meanwhile, Reps. Lawrence Coughlin (R-PA) and Robert A. Borski (D-PA) sent an April 25 "Dear Colleague" letter supporting:

- H.R. 1605, which lets states use highway funds for transit or rail (including Amtrak) projects which alleviate traffic congestion or improve air quality (requires 25% local share); and

- H.R. 958, authorizing use of Federal-aid bridge replacement and rehabilitation funds for transit- and railroad-over-highway bridges.

### TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

More on Amtrak's April 7 Changes

Bay Minette, AL became a "Gulf Breeze" stop. The Thruway bus connection for "San Joaquin" Trains 703-704 was extended to Healdsburg, Cloverdale, Ukiah and Willits, CA.

Amtrak has replaced its regional timetables with "panelcard" timetables for individual routes. Also, the all-inclusive slick-cover "National Train Timetable" now is called "System Train Timetable" and has a smaller press run but should be available at stations on request; the same information is available in two new products: "Northeast Timetable" (Northeast and Empire Corridors, including Richmond/Newport News and Cape Cod) and "National Timetable" (all other routes).

(NARP has suggested adding at least condensed versions of the two Montreal routes and Boston-Albany service to the "Northeast Timetable," as they are Amtrak's most northeasterly services!)

In the new timetables, the list of "Silver Meteor" services should show slumbercoach, buffet-style dining car, and one lounge car running "New York-Wildwood—Miami" (not NY-Orlando-Miami). The lounge car with "tray meal table service" runs Jacksonville-Orlando-Tampa.

### Other News

Effective June 16, the Ogden-Denver portion of Amtrak's "Pioneer" route will be via Wyoming instead of Salt Lake City and Grand Junction, CO, but the train will be linked to Salt Lake City via Thruway bus connection (Mar. News). The westbound "California Zephyr/Desert Wind/Pioneer" is expected to leave Chicago 40 mins. later (3:35p), with "Pioneer" arriving Seattle three hours 50 mins. earlier (6:10p). Passengers will be able to connect in Portland from "Pioneer" points east to "Coast Starlight" points south.

Watch out! Eastbound "Zephyr/Wind" will run slightly earlier. "Pioneer" is to leave Seattle two hours 40 mins. later (8a), arrive Denver 5:20p . . . and wait there until the combined train departs at 9p, to arrive Chicago 10 mins. earlier (4:15p). Amtrak's two eastbound services tentatively are planned to depart Salt Lake City just 15 minutes apart: "Zephyr/Wind" at 5:15a and the "Pioneer" Thruway bus connection at 5:30a. NARP has urged Amtrak to have "Pioneer" depart Ogden later (shifting some layover time from Denver to Ogden), preferably late enough to permit the Thruway bus to depart Salt Lake City at 7a.

Disadvantages of the faster "Pioneer" include middle-of-the-night times at Boise and a Portland-to-Seattle schedule close to "Starlight's." NARP has suggested an operational solution that might allow "Pioneer" to run 90 rather than 30 minutes ahead of "Starlight."

Amtrak's major goal is to improve reliability of all three trains; Amtrak believes the June schedules will accomplish this but recognizes further adjustments may be desirable.

NARP at its May board meeting will consider whether to push another option: running "Pioneer" in and out of Salt Lake City in one or both directions, eliminating the need for some Thruway buses, and/or running "Pioneer" into downtown Cheyenne.