



from
**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
RAILROAD PASSENGERS**

Vol. 5, No. 4



April, 1971

'Railpax' Becomes 'Amtrak' As Criticism Grows

NARP, Congress, Unions, States Question Absence Of Routes

NARP Initiates Court Actions On Eve of Amtrak Operations

The National Rail Passenger Corp. law provided that railroads post a 30-day notice upon signing a contract with Amtrak. On April 1, when many railroads had posted notices, none of the railroads had entered into an Amtrak contract. On April 26 NARP filed action in U.S. District Court in Washington to hold off train discontinuances, giving Congress time to re-examine the situation and take appropriate action.

In a separate case, NARP will initiate an action against the Southern Ry. which is staying out of Amtrak but trying to discontinue the Atlanta-Savannah *Nancy Hanks*. NARP's position is that the Central of Georgia Ry., over which the *Nancy Hanks* runs, is an operating subdivision of the Southern and, as such, cannot independently join Amtrak. The Southern owns over 99% of the Georgia line, and 14 of the 17 executive members of the Central are Southern employees in New York, Washington and Atlanta.

The National Rail Passenger Corp. took "Amtrak" as its new name and contemplates initiating its operation on May 1. NARP, labor unions and Governors of several States are initiating legal action to delay train discontinuances which are believed "not warranted."

On several occasions NARP and other interested parties have urged Amtrak to expand its system or revise certain of its procedures. Amtrak has not attempted to compromise on these issues. Within one month, Amtrak incorporators have had to appear before three Congressional committees to explain their skeletal system.

In one hearing Senator Clifford P. Case (R-N.J.) suggested that Amtrak could not expand because it did not have enough money. He asked why the incorporators did not seek additional funding. The Amtrak response was that the network as announced should prove itself first.

Before a subcommittee of the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee on April 21, Amtrak Chairman David W. Kendall said that even if Amtrak had more money the system would not be expanded anyway. The Committee Chairman, Harley O. Staggers (D-W.Va.) said that he would not have worked for the Amtrak bill if he had known such drastic service reductions would result. He said the incorporators "did not follow the will of Congress."

Amtrak's incorporators — including Consumer Representative Catherine May Bedell — kept insisting that Amtrak "make a profit" while Congressmen were urging the needs of the public be considered.

The governors of four major states asked for a six-month delay in the start of Amtrak operations. They were: Milton J. Shapp of Pennsylvania, William T. Cahill of New Jersey, Nelson A. Rockefeller of New York and John J. Gilligan of Ohio.

Meanwhile, the railroads have posed problems. The Rock Island and Southern railroads declined to join Amtrak. The Denver & Rio Grande Western has jeopardized the *California*

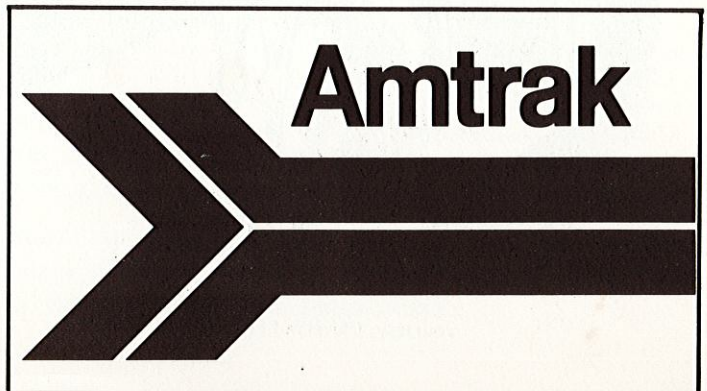
(continued on Page 2)

NARP'S ADVISORY BOARD EXPANDS

Nineteen national figures have joined with NARP in an advisory capacity to further the Association's objectives of improving rail passenger service. Among the new members is Lewis Mumford, the urban-theorist who has recently called for a massive reconstruction and rejuvenation of the nation's railroad system.

Other new members, with affiliations listed for identification only, are: Laurance H. Armour, Jr., Chicago; Melvin M. Belli, attorney, San Francisco; James D. Braman, former Seattle mayor and DOT assistant secretary for environment and urban systems; Bruce Catton, senior editor, American Heritage Magazine, New York; Professor Henry Steele Commager, Amherst College, Mass.; Huntington Hartford, New York; Jenkin Lloyd Jones, editor and publisher, Tulsa Tribune; Henry Luce III, publisher, Time Magazine; Bill Mauldin, editorial cartoonist, Chicago Sun-Times; Ogden Nash, poet and humorist, Baltimore; John M. Olin, Olin Corp., St. Louis; Vincent Price, actor, Los Angeles; Senator Winston Prouty, Vermont; A. Philip Randolph, president emeritus, Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, New York; Mayor M. E. Sensenbrenner, Columbus, Ohio; Jerry Voorhis, consumer advocate, Claremont, Cal.; Roy Wilkins, executive director, Nat'l. Ass'n. for the Advancement of Colored People, New York; and Sam Wyly, chairman, University Computing Co., Dallas.

Thirteen others who have served NARP in an advisory capacity for several years will continue to do so except for Edmund K. Faltermayer who is now a member of the board of directors.



"RAILPAX" (from p. 1)

Zephyr route by delaying its contract with Amtrak.

In an interview with *Washington Star* reporter Steve Aug, Rio Grande President Gus B. Aydelott said, "Our trouble is we have to compete with Union Pacific which is a flat country double-track mainline railroad. We have a single track mountain line." He added that forcing Rio Grande to operate passenger trains under these conditions would cause it to lose freight business.

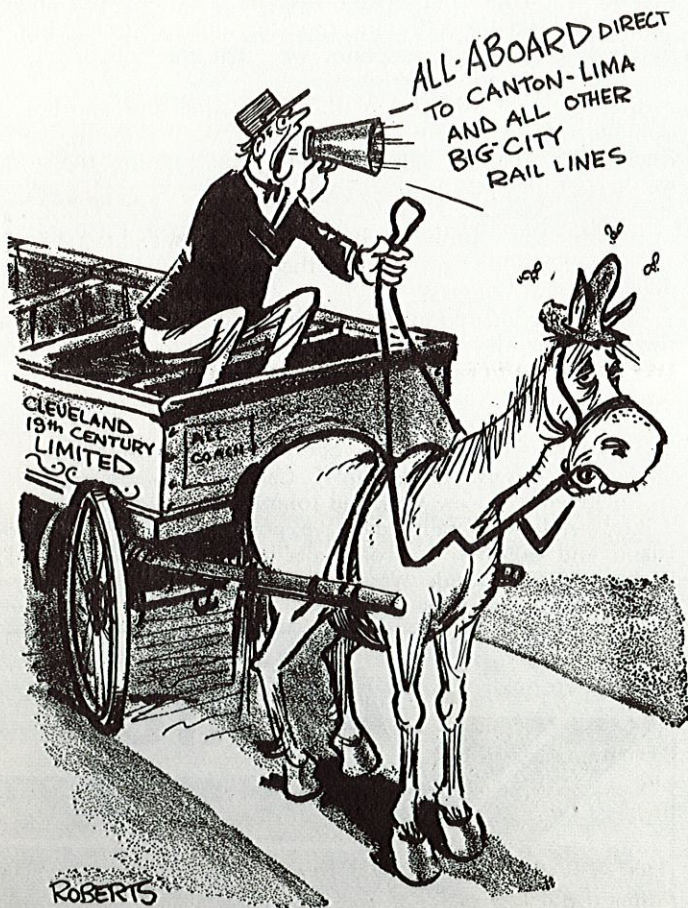
The Rio Grande runs one round-trip passenger train three times weekly and if it does not join Amtrak the train must be continued until at least July 1, 1973 anyway. But — since it will be an independent operation — the Rio Grande can shunt it onto sidings to permit freights to pass. The same tri-weekly schedule is anticipated under Amtrak.

The Amtrak system was revised to include Ogden, Utah, by re-routing the *California Zephyr* north of Salt Lake City. The action came after officials in Ogden announced that local financial assistance would be provided for the necessary station modifications.

As of April 25, Amtrak had not announced who its chief executive will be. Reportedly, the corporation is offering an annual salary that includes \$150,000 in direct and deferred benefits.

Amtrak announced that four new *Metroliners* will be put into service on May 1 between New York and Washington, D.C. While Amtrak took credit for this move, it was learned by NARP that the Office of High Speed Ground Transport and Penn Central had planned to add the trains anyway.

NARP has revised and updated its basic brochure entitled, "Why — in the 1970's do we need rail passenger service?" It is available in limited quantities to members wishing to distribute the brochures at meetings or to fellow train riders.



courtesy, Cleveland Press

YOUNGSTERS RIDE THE RAILS

Each year thousands of school children, tourists and vacationers sign up for special trains to all parts of the country. A good example is the Fresh Air Fund of New York City which sends city children to suburban, country-like settings in the summer for their recreational enjoyment and cultural benefit. Within a nine week period during the summer of 1970, the Fresh Air Fund sent 5,276 children out of New York by railroad. If enough equipment were available, the Fresh Air Fund would like to send an *additional* 2,320 children to distant points by rail in 1971. This would be a total of 7,596 riders if Railpax and New York Commuter lines have enough equipment available. If not, many children will travel by bus.

The Fund's Fall 1970 newsletter *What's In The Air* said, "Except for the armed forces, the Fresh Air Fund is probably the biggest single consumer of surface public passenger transportation in the Northeast."

RAILS FOR THE FUTURE

The following editorial is reprinted from the April 2 edition of the New York Times.

The abandonment of the SST could provide an opportunity to inaugurate a long-term transportation policy of great benefit to all Americans. The key clearly is neither faster air travel nor increased reliance on the automobile; the answer for efficient travel, particularly over short and medium-range distances, is rapid mass transportation by rail.

The imminent start of operations under the new Railpax corporation is a mere hint of what needs to be done. Railpax is at best a stopgap to prevent the moribund passenger service from expiring. By trying to revitalize a limited number of routes — far too few to merit the label of a "national" system — the new corporation can do little more than keep an obsolescent transportation technology temporarily functioning and perhaps even introduce some modest improvements on the rail network.

The real need, however, is not to tinker with that outdated technology but to unleash the best engineering talent to design a new technology, related to, but not necessarily bound by, the mass-transport concept pioneered by the railroads in an earlier era.

This is an endeavor in which the kind of governmental support originally set aside for the SST could pay off quickly. A number of countries, among them Japan and France, already operate high-speed trains effectively and are currently engaged in experimentation with air-cushioned rather than railbound vehicles. The *Metroliner* between New York and Washington, though no revolutionary breakthrough, has nevertheless given solid indication of the rail traffic potential, provided the emphasis is on new levels of speed and comfort.

The conversion of aerospace industries and the retraining of engineers and other personnel may not be easy; indeed, it would probably be prohibitive without Government subsidy. But a California aerospace concern is already at work on the design and production of a 250-mile-per-hour train. This is in line with the experience of the nation's automobile manufacturers who confounded the skeptics at the beginning of World War II by converting rapidly to aircraft production. Today major universities, under the pressure of budget deficits and internal opposition to defense research, are clamoring for the support necessary to harness their scientific and technological potential to the service of domestic progress.

A faster and efficient national passenger transport system represents such progress. The SST would at best have served only a few, at a high cost to the environment. Rapid rail transportation would serve the many, while at the same time reducing the pollution and congestion created by automobiles and aviation.

A History of NARP . . .

Part II — Railroad Litigation



MISCELLANY



Beginning in Jan. 1968, NARP participated in numerous proceedings before the ICC, state regulatory commissions and the courts on passenger service matters. NARP did not set out to preserve each and every train operating. The Association participated in carefully selected cases which were of overriding importance either because of the service involved or of a key point of law which had particular significance.

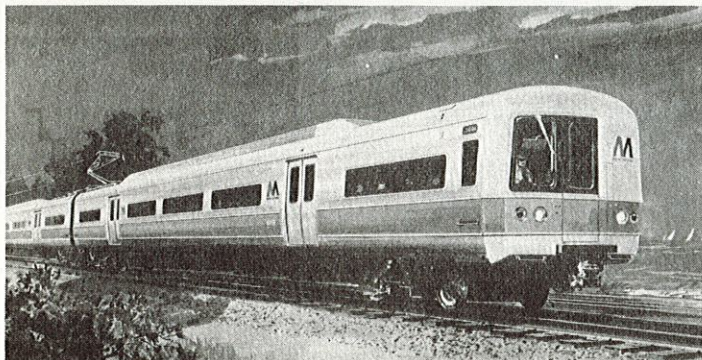
One objective of litigation, in addition to keeping and improving particular services, was to convince the railroads that total discontinuance would not be permitted, thus encouraging them to join the search for a positive solution to the problem. NARP has made a major contribution of legal talent or expert testimony in the following cases:

- ♦ San Francisco — Chicago *California Zephyr* and *City of San Francisco*
- X ♦ Atlanta — Chicago *Georgian*
- ♦ New Orleans — Los Angeles *Sunset* "adequacies case"
- ♦ Cincinnati — Chicago *James Whitcomb Riley*
- X ♦ Chicago — Texas points *Texas Eagle*
- ♦ Penn Central proposed discontinuance of 34 passenger trains west of Harrisburg and Buffalo
- X ♦ Union Pacific discontinuance of service into Kansas City Union Station
- ♦ New York — Atlanta *Piedmont*

NARP also participated with its own attorney in the following additional ICC and state commission proceedings:

- ♦ western railroads special party fare increase, denied 1968
- ♦ Penn Central discontinuance of checked baggage, denied 1968
- ♦ Penn Central, Cleveland-Columbus discontinuance, application withdrawn 1969
- ♦ Missouri Pacific, St. Louis-Kansas City discontinuance denied 1969
- ♦ Chicago & North Western, Milwaukee-Green Bay discontinuance, allowed 1970
- ♦ Rock Island, Chicago-Des Moines-Omaha discontinuance, allowed 1970
- ♦ Illinois Central fare increases, denied 1970

In two cases NARP supported discontinuance of little-used trains when the railroads — Baltimore & Ohio and Norfolk & Western — agreed to improve and upgrade remaining services. NARP made known its willingness to help other railroads under similar circumstances but no proposals for service improvements came forth.



BY MID-1972, General Electric is expected to deliver 144 high-speed commuter coaches to the New York MTA and the Connecticut DOT for operation by Penn Central on the New Haven line. GE is investing \$14 million to construct new facilities in Erie, Pa., for the assembly of rapid transit and commuter cars.

COMMUTER LINE REVIVAL — In Pittsburgh, City Treasurer Joseph L. Cosetti boarded a train in his current campaign for county commissioner to dramatize the fact that three studies of Baltimore & Ohio commuter service had been made but no results have ever been announced. He criticized the local transit authority and called the B&O commuter trains "the fastest, most comfortable means of mass transit in the Monongahela Valley. Not only should they be saved, but they should be modernized and their schedules expanded."

CONGESTION IN ISRAEL — Israeli Transport Minister Shimon Peres has ordered a preliminary plan to be drawn up for a high speed rail link between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem which would involve construction of new railway stations in the heart of both cities. Mr. Peres said the new line should be able to carry passengers between the two cities in 25 minutes, less than a third of the present time. He said such a railway would considerably ease pressure on existing highways between the cities.

COUGH . . . COUGH — The Committee for Better Transit based in Long Island City, N.Y. reports in its newsletter *Notes from Underground* that the Illinois Central has decided "smoking will not be allowed on the new doubledecker commuter cars it has ordered; the biggest reason for this was the housekeeping problems smoking creates . . . Air is a bit cleaner inside Boston & Maine passenger trains now. The road has passed a new regulation banning smoking on all passenger trains." Meanwhile, a freshman Congressman, Rep. C. W. Young of Florida, has introduced a bill to require airlines, railroads and bus companies to provide a protected area for passengers who do not smoke. The bill empowers DOT to establish regulations on smoking which apply to all carriers operating in interstate commerce. The Congressman has been swamped with mail supporting his position.

PENN CENTRAL suffered a \$431.2 million loss in 1970. That amounts to \$13.67 for each second of the year.

APRIL 19 — That was a big day for NARP. Fifty-six persons renewed their membership with the association setting a one-day record for 1971.

USE THIS COUPON TO BRING IN A NEW MEMBER TODAY!

National Association of Railroad Passengers
417 New Jersey Ave., S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003

Yes, I want to aid the cause of better rail passenger service. Enclosed is my remittance for the category checked:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular \$5 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsoring \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing \$10 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining \$100 or more |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participating \$25 | |

(Please Print)

Mr. _____
 Miss _____
 Mrs.: _____
 Address _____
 City _____
 State _____ Zip _____

Note: NARP members should not use this form to renew. It would be helpful if members wait until they receive the renewal reminder, and use the special coded envelope enclosed with it.

On Amtrak and "Profits"

"Is Amtrak a railroad euthanasia plan?" asks New York Times' columnist Tom Wicker. Excerpts from his March 24 column appear below:

WASHINGTON — The mandate of Congress to the Railpax corporation was to establish and operate a basic railroad passenger service for the nation. The route system announced. . . does little to answer the question whether Railpax can even come close to doing so — whether, in fact, it is simply another step toward a foreordained death of rail passenger service in America.

Obviously, not every scenic or historic route could or needed to be maintained So the route structure is not the major complaint against Railpax; and the routes may well be further improved before the corporation actually begins to operate passenger trains. The problem is that the whole operation, so far, appears defensive — as if operating passenger trains were an unpleasant duty, like keeping an old and feeble person alive, that everyone will someday be glad to shed.

When it became known that President Nixon had come close to vetoing the Railpax bill, and later that the White House had severely restricted the route system first proposed by the Dept. of Transportation, the project suffered from the obvious lack of high-level enthusiasm.

Hanging over the enterprise like a gigantic sword is the assumption that at some fairly early date — two or three or five years — Railpax will have to become self-supporting or even profitable, or die. This passes understanding. Nobody requires the Post Office to make a profit; highways and everything that moves on them get enormous Federal support; all sorts of other public facilities (national parks and airports, for example) are subsidized. Why rail passenger service should necessarily have to be a profit-making operation, once taken out of the railroads' hands, has never been explained.

[An attractive] rail passenger system is not going to be provided by a reluctant Federal Government forcing an underfunded corporation to show a fast profit, or by a defensive operation that concentrates on cutting service rather than going out aggressively after new riders, new techniques, new ideas.

That is why it is not yet clear whether Railpax means railroad redemption or railroad euthanasia. The worst of it is that no one around here seems much concerned for the patient.

FRIENDS OF THE RAILROAD PASSENGER

16 — Senator Mike Mansfield

A zealous supporter of improved rail passenger service, Democratic Majority Leader Mike Mansfield of Montana gave vigorous backing last year to legislation which created Amtrak. He now considers Amtrak only a ghost of what it was intended to be. Appearing before the Senate Subcommittee on DOT Appropriations on April 6, Senator Mansfield said:

"Who needs the railroads? You do.' That is a very, very familiar refrain. This also summarizes what we had hoped to accomplish by the Railpax Plan and other programs designed to assist the nation's railroads.

"The events of the past two weeks seem to indicate the results are quite the opposite. Quite conclusively, it now appears that Railpax has given the railroads the opportunity to embark on a mass passenger train discontinuance. As of May 1st we will have a totally inadequate system of rail passenger service still to be operated by the same railroads which have for years attempted to abandon their responsibility to the traveling public.

"What we have done is to give the railroads a vehicle for massive discontinuance which avoids the traditional process of filing applications for discontinuance with the ICC, in itself an unsatisfactory process.

"I am convinced that an aggressive campaign to return the traveling public to the rails would succeed. The *Metroliner* is an example, even though the Federal Government has had a difficult time convincing Penn Central of this.

SNARLED SUBWAY IN WASHINGTON, D.C. — Kentucky Congressman William H. Natcher has been urged by NARP to free the \$34.2 million in subway construction funds that he has withheld from the Washington Metro Area Transit Authority. In a letter to Mr. Natcher, NARP stated unequivocally that Washington needs the "immediate construction of a proven, high-speed, grade-separated, modern rail system. That is what has been planned for the city and approved by its citizens. That is what the city should get." Mr. Natcher has been pushing for additional highways in the capitol city.

NARP MEMBERS SUPPORT ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN — Local ads have been placed by members on behalf of NARP by Everett Stuart of Stratham, N. Hampshire in the *Manchester Union Leader* in the *Delco Veteran* newsletter by Harry Hyde, Bryn Mawr, Pa. . . . and in several California newspapers by Scott Schiechl, San Rafael, Ca.

"DEAR GOVERNOR MANDEL" — "Maryland will lose much of its intercity rail passenger service . . . on May 1, 1971. There is considerable dismay with the loss particularly since it is utilized by many commuters between the Potomac Valley and the District of Columbia. We understand that a Maryland Dept. of Transportation is presently in its formative stages and will be in operation on July 1. Because of recent developments we ask that the new department give priority to resolving the rail commuting problems in the Potomac Valley on the B&O and between Baltimore and Washington on the B&O and Penn Central. A complete plan of action should be developed including, but not limited to, purchase of new commuter cars, development of a promotional fare structure and station modernization." Signed: Joseph Vranich, NARP Executive Director.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

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

(A not-for-profit corporation)

Anthony Haswell, Chairman

Joseph Vranich, Executive Director

Ann Hagemann, Executive Secretary

ADVISORY BOARD: Laurance H. Armour, Jr., Melvin M. Belli, Esq., Ray Bradbury, James D. Braman, Bruce Catton, Prof. Henry Steele Commager, Huntington Hartford, Samuel Insull III, Jenkin Lloyd Jones, Dean Walter Kenworthy, Pauline Koch, Henry Luce III, Peter Lyon, Bill Mauldin, Lewis Mumford, Ogden Nash, John M. Olin, Prof. Mario Pei, Sen. Claiborne Pell, Vincent Price, Sen. Winston Prouty, A. Philip Randolph, H. Lang Rogers, Elmo Roper, Mayor M. E. Sensenbrenner, Whitney North Seymour, Esq., Gov. Milton J. Shapp, Jerry Voorhis, Irving Wallace, Roy Wilkins, Prof. Charles Alan Wright, Sam Wyly.

(Any material appearing herein may be reproduced without permission. Credit to the source is requested.)