

NARP Seeks Improved Railroad Safety

The Federal Government wouldn't permit an airline to defer maintenance on its fleet of passenger and cargo planes, but it is looking away while the nation's railroads defer maintenance on track and roadbed.

That charge was made recently by Anthony Haswell, chairman of the National Association of Railroad Passengers, in testimony before the House of Representatives Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce.

According to Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) records for 1973, track related accidents rose 38 per cent over the 1972 rate. There were 29 persons killed and 342 injured in derailments during the first ten months. Preliminary data for the rest of the year and for the first two months of 1974 indicate that derailments are increasing. There were 64 passengers injured in the first two months of 1974, compared with only one in the same period in 1973. The primary cause of derailments is defects in or improper maintenance of tracks and roadbed.

"The nature of railroad track is such that it will not immediately fall apart if normal maintenance is suspended or curtailed," he said. "Accordingly, it follows that some maintenance activities such as replacement of rails or renewal of ballast could be deferred for two or three years without resulting in a violation of the track standards. However, the longer that such a situation exists, the more expensive it will become to keep the track from falling below standards, and the greater likelihood there will be of a sudden failure causing a serious derailment. It would indeed

An apology for failure to answer recent letters from NARP members has been issued by Anthony Haswell, NARP chairman. NARP's overworked staff has been battling to block the reappointment of Roger Lewis as chief executive of Amtrak, and in addition, has been seeking legislation which would directly affect railroad passenger service. "Hopefully, we'll be able to devote more time to member correspondence soon," Mr. Haswell added.

be tragic if after the railroads were rebuilt to adequate standards, they were allowed to decay all over again. The old adage that "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" is certainly applicable here.

"Accordingly, we believe that Congress should prohibit deferral of track and roadbed maintenance.

"The ultimate question that must be decided by the Congress is whether the United States should have safe and adequate railroads, or only the kind that the railroad companies choose to provide," Mr. Haswell declared.

He said America has "the worst railroad lines of any advanced industrial nation." He asserted that action must be taken by the Federal Government to remedy the situation.

Part of the problem, Mr. Haswell explained, is due to the poor financial condition of some railroads, and part is a result of excessive dividend payments and diversification into other businesses. "Congress will be doing a real service if it can persuade the diversifiers to get out of the railroad business and apply their financial talents in areas where there will be less adverse impact on the public," Mr. Haswell said.

He stated that Congress will have to supply financial assistance for track and roadbed improvements to bankrupt and near-bankrupt railroads, but added that "in any event, Congress should not give the railroad industry one more dollar of government money or government credit unless and until it places the railroads under a specific legal duty to fix up their track and roadbeds."

Mr. Haswell sharply criticized the Federal Railroad Administrator's recent statement that 40 track inspectors are sufficient for the entire railroad system of over 200,000 route-miles.

"In contrast, the Postal Service recently ran an advertisement proclaiming that 1700 inspectors were employed to protect the

(continued on page three)

Copies of Mr. Haswell's testimony in opposition to the confirmation of Roger Lewis as an Amtrak director may be obtained from Miss Linda Sturgill, executive secretary, NARP, 417 New Jersey Ave., S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003.



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS**

Vol. 8, No. 4



May-June, 1974

Haswell Testifies Against R. Lewis at Senate Hearings

Testifying before the Senate Commerce Committee June 6, Anthony Haswell, chairman of NARP, outlined the case against Roger Lewis, who is one of the Presidential nominees for the new Amtrak board of directors.

"While it would be theoretically possible for the new Amtrak board to hire Mr. Lewis as chief executive officer even if he were not on the board himself, we strongly doubt that the board would do so in the face of Senate rejection of Mr. Lewis' board nomination. Accordingly, we ask that the Senate send a message to the new Amtrak board that Mr. Lewis is not acceptable as chief executive officer—by refusing to confirm him as director," Mr. Haswell concluded his statement.

Mr. Haswell also told the committee that Mr. Lewis told him three years ago that he, Lewis, would not have accepted the chief executive post unless he were also given a board membership.

In addition to Mr. Lewis and the other five directors named by President Nixon April 23 (NARP NEWS April 1974), the Senate will consider three more nominees for three or four year terms: Sun Oil Co. chairman Robert G. Dunlop; Northwestern University finance professor Donald P. Jacobs; and Washington lawyer Gerald D. Morgan, who resigned in January as Amtrak's vice president for government and public affairs.

Amtrak Timetable Suggests Bus Trips by Railroad Passengers

Despite the bus companies' continuing attacks on Amtrak, the National Railroad Passenger Corporation is urging its passengers to take a bus once in a while.

Showing an amazing degree of good will, Amtrak has inserted an ad in its new "All-America Schedules" urging: "If our train can't take you all the way, finish your trip by bus."

The new consolidated timetables list all of Amtrak's trains serving over 400 cities and towns on the 24,000-mile nationwide system.

"Nevertheless," Amtrak's advertisement admits, "there are towns and villages where our trains don't stop, but interstate buses do."

The ad continues:

"Take our train as far as you can. Then, for the last leg of your trip, take Greyhound, or Continental Trailways or any other convenient bus line. We're all working together to give America better transportation."

The All-America Schedules include eight of the bus services most frequently used by Amtrak passengers, plus timetables of the four U.S. passenger lines not in the Amtrak system (Southern, Denver & Rio Grande, Rock Island and Georgia), plus principal Canadian and Mexican rail connections.

Amtrak Orders 200 New Cars, Four More Turbine Trains

Orders for 200 high-performance passenger cars and four new high-speed five-car turbine trains have been placed by Amtrak. In addition, Amtrak will buy the two turbine trains it is now operating under a lease.

Coupled with 57 locomotive-hauled Metroliner-type cars ordered last October, the new equipment will add almost 40 per cent to Amtrak's passenger carrying capacity (22,816 seats added to 57,000).

In addition, Amtrak said it will place an order shortly for 25 additional diesel locomotives with special electric generating equipment to augment 150 new 3,000 horsepower diesels already received or scheduled for delivery this summer. Also on order are 26 new 6,000 horsepower electric locomotives.

The six new five-car turbine trains, which are capable of speeds up to 125 mph., will be used on short and medium distance routes radiating out of Chicago. They will be maintained at Amtrak's new Brighton Park Maintenance Facility. The majority of the 200 new passenger cars will be used on routes along the eastern seaboard and in the middle west.

The Budd Company of Philadelphia will build the 200 passenger cars and already is at work on the 57 cars ordered earlier. From the outside the new cars will look almost exactly like Amtrak's present fleet of self-propelled electric Metroliner trains which operate between Washington and New York. However, the new cars will be locomotive drawn.

Inside, the cars have been substantially redesigned for greater passenger comfort and to allow an easy change of interior arrangements. For example, each car is designed so that seating capacity can be increased or decreased depending on the market to be served. A new buffet section has been designed to increase food serving capability on the trains and each seat will have individual trays and reading lights. The cars will be easily convertible from day coaches to overnight coaches or to lounge-coaches or entertainment cars. The flexibility is being achieved

A recent court decision stemming from the 1971 Amtrak takeover of intercity service, has placed the New York-Philadelphia "200 series" trains firmly in Amtrak's grasp. Operation of the trains has been under Amtrak since May, 1971, although a question existed concerning the "intercity/commuter" nature of the service. Had the court ruled the service commuter in nature, the trains would have reverted to Penn Central control.

by means of "floor tracks", which are being utilized for the first time in U.S. rail passenger cars.

All of the new cars, including the six turbine trains, will be fitted with advanced type suspension systems to improve ride quality, as well as all-electric air conditioning and heating systems.

Delivery of the 200 cars will follow delivery of the 57 which will be delivered between April and August of 1975. All 257 will be delivered by May 1976. Total cost of the 200 will be \$81 million.

The six Turboliners include two trains that Amtrak has been leasing and has had in service between Chicago and St. Louis since October of last year. They compiled a 99 per cent reliability record for the first four months of 1974.

Amtrak had leased the trains from ANF-Frnageco, of Crespin, France, which is also building 41 of the same train sets for the French National Railways. The other four French-made Turboliners will be shipped to Amtrak in December, 1974 and January, 1975.

Total cost of the 308-seat turbine trains, including shipping to the United States, import duty, initial spare parts and equipment added by Amtrak after arrival will be \$18 million. Amtrak's lease payments will be credited toward the purchase price.

Having tired of doing a thrifty 50, you're now wondering whether to go Amtrak and leave the driving to Uncle Sam. Be advised that Uncle Sam runs his railroads as sloppily as the rest of his business endeavors. In December over half (51 per cent) of Amtrak's 6,030 trains arrived late—and Amtrak doesn't consider a train late unless it arrives more than six minutes after the scheduled arrival time. The performance of the fabled New York-Washington Metroliner was particularly abysmal. Only 42.9 per cent of the Metroliners arrived "on time"; of the 868 trains that made the run, 496 were an average of 30 minutes late.

— National Review

Mail orders for Amtrak tour brochures may now be sent to any of three regional distribution centers. The new locations are P.O. Box 300, Bellmore, N.Y. 11710; P.O. Box 4733, Chicago, Ill. 60680 and P.O. Box 20987, Los Angeles, Calif. 90006.

TRAINS AND ENERGY (Cont'd.) . . .

In our last newsletter, we criticized the study done by Stanford Research Institute for Southern Pacific for using fuel consumption data for the Los Angeles-San Francisco and Los Angeles-Chicago Amtrak routes based on "the performance of the ancient, worn-out diesels used on most Amtrak routes since 1971." We have since been informed that the fuel consumption data used to evaluate these routes was derived from SP's experience on the *Coast Starlight* between Portland and Los Angeles, where relatively modern SP diesels are normally assigned. Nevertheless, the fact remains that these diesels, unlike Amtrak's new fleet, were designed primarily for freight trains, and that the *Coast Starlight* trains are technologically a far cry from the potential energy efficiency of modern passenger trains, particularly in high density corridors.

The following is from a letter we received from Marc Roddin, one of the co-authors of the SRI study:

"The purpose of our study was to analyze implications for passenger transportation of the current petroleum supply problem, which is expected to be with us through 1980. During this short-term period, it will be possible to build and operate energy-efficient buses, whereas rail systems, even if they are more energy-efficient, could not be planned, designed, constructed, and put into operation during this time. After 1980, though, advanced design rail systems, comparable to BART, will be the optimal solution for some metropolitan areas, particularly with an ample supply of electricity generated by nuclear energy or coal.

"One conclusion of this research project, although not stated in our report to the Southern Pacific, is that double-decker vehicles are more efficient than single-decked ones. As you acknowledge in your commentary, this is true of commute trains, buses, and Boeing 747SR aircraft. Because of their efficiency advantages, these vehicles should be used whenever practical in dense corridors. Bi-level commute trains have been with us for years; but double-decker buses and planes are rare in this country, although they are in use abroad. The Transportation Equipment Development Company of Portland, Maine advises me that they have orders for ten double-decker Neoplan buses in the United States, with delivery expected by the end of the current year. Changes are being made in the type of glass used, the engines, and the height to meet U.S. safety, emission, and clearance requirements. The demand is so great that plans are being made to have the buses manufactured in California rather than imported from West Germany. *Urban Transport News* of April 29, 1974 reports that there may be a U.S. market for between 200 and 700 high capacity buses, both double-decker and articulated, the findings of Booz-Allen Applied Research's Project Superbus. As for airplanes, while it is true that the 747SR has never been used in this country, I am sure that a version of it would be introduced here if there were sufficient demand."

Colorado Protests Switch of Train Funds to Highway Project

In a strongly-worded letter to Secretary of Transportation Claude S. Brinegar, the Colorado Association of Railroad Passengers has protested the DOT plan to abandon testing for a 150-mile per hour passenger train, and instead, use the \$5.6 million for building a 13-mile highway between the Pueblo Airport and the DOT test facility.

Dr. Jerome Alpiner, president of the association, said:

"We wish to publicly offer the following recommendation to you:

1. Keep your damn highway out of Colorado
2. Seek legislation to turn over the \$5.6 million to Amtrak so they could develop the new train
3. Upon construction, run the train in service between Denver, Colorado Springs and Pueblo, and
4. Order officials of the Federal Railroad Administration who are involved with the test center to ride the high-speed train to Pueblo instead of taking airplanes. These FRA people should be on the rails anyway to experience first-hand some of the conditions existing on Amtrak.

"Assuming that the *Washington Star News* is correct, your statements cause railroad passengers—once again—to take a back seat to persons riding other modes of transportation. This is surprising since you are a member of the Amtrak Board of Directors.

"You reportedly have stated that 'any demonstration of new passenger equipment should be a part of the Amtrak budgeted program' and not the responsibility of DOT. Yet, Mr. Brinegar, in your own department. . .

1. The Federal Highway Department conducts massive research and test projects regarding new methods of highway design and construction,
2. The Federal Aviation Administration is spending millions to research, design and test highly complex air traffic control systems,
3. The Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA) spent \$40 million to construct a 2.2 mile people-mover "demonstration" in Morgantown, West Virginia, which is a fiasco,
4. UMTA, again, is financing construction of a \$250 million "demonstration" track for the controversial Skybus project in Pittsburgh, Pa.

"And while all of this was (and is) going on in your department, the Department of Defense for decades has conducted costly research, development and demonstration programs for

The April issue of NARP NEWS carried a quote from U.S. Senators Robert Byrd and Clifford Case which stated that the original plans for the BART system in California called for fully automated trains with no on-board operators. Harre DeMoro of the OAKLAND TRIBUNE notes that such was never the case; that from the very first, BART planned to have an on-board attendant on each train.

new aircraft designs. Once these are perfected the commercial airline industry reaps the technological benefits without paying the developmental price.

"If DOT is not interested in developing a new high-speed train, then the \$5.6 million appropriated by Congress should be granted to Amtrak. If you are not prepared to do this, then we—the railroad passengers in Colorado—think you should consider leaving your post on the Amtrak Board of Directors. Your kind of 'help' we don't need," Dr. Alpiner concluded.

Amtrak registered a 25.2 percent gain in revenue passenger miles (combined miles traveled by revenue-paying passengers) in 1973, according to figures filed with the Interstate Commerce Commission. The 1972 total of 3,038,603,492 jumped to 3,806,510,624 in 1973.

Support NARP — Bring In A New Member

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

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

Contributing \$10
 Participating \$25

Sponsoring \$50
 Sustaining \$100
 Life, \$500 or more

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

SAFETY (Cont'd. from page 1) . . .

public against mail fraud. While this is certainly an evil, very few, if any, persons have ever been killed or maimed by mail fraud," Haswell stated.

Haswell asserted that the present policy of relying largely on the railroads to inspect their own track and roadbed is "like hiring the fox to inspect the chicken-coop."

He asked Congress to enact a program consisting of:

1. Improved criteria for reporting of train accidents;
2. Publication of prompt and complete accident reports by the Department of Transportation;
3. Improved track maintenance standards;
4. Legal prohibition of maintenance deferment;
5. Better inspection of track and roadbed; and
6. Congressional oversight of DOT administration of the new standards.

"Congress must act immediately, in view of the rising curve of accidents and fatalities, to strengthen the law and see that it is properly administered and enforced," Haswell concluded.

Proposal for Fast Turbo trains Between Pittsburgh and Cleveland Unveiled

A proposal for fast Turbo trains which would travel between downtown Pittsburgh and downtown Cleveland in less than two hours was unveiled recently by Robert J. Casey, executive director of the RAIL Foundation and the National Association of Railroad Passengers.

"We could have these trains in operation in 18 months," Mr. Casey stated. "The technology is here, and the cost would be only about \$40 million, or less than two miles of the controversial Pittsburgh Skybus."

Mr. Casey said the Pittsburgh-Cleveland Megalopolis of more than five million people is a prime candidate for fast "corridor" service, and he urged the state governments of Ohio and Pennsylvania, as well as the Congressional delegations, to act immediately to institute the service.

"Instead of squandering tax money on experimental systems, we should be using modern technology to implement trains right now," he said.

The Pittsburgh-Cleveland trains would also stop at Sewickley, Pennsylvania, Youngstown, Ohio, and in the Cleveland I-271 — I-290 suburban area.

Service would be provided by Amtrak, and trains would be 125 mph Turbo trains such as those now operating between Chicago and St. Louis. The Turbo trains are manufactured by Rohr Corporation under license from a French manufacturer.

He added that this train service could offer immediate relief from air and highway congestion.

Citizen Wins Case Against Amtrak in California Court

A rash of customer lawsuits against Amtrak could result from a California court decision recently.

Stephen Q. Lannes of Oakland, California, received a judgment for \$66 against Amtrak for Amtrak's failure to provide a lounge car on the San Francisco Zephyr as advertised.

Original Amtrak service standards established by the Secretary of Transportation require a lounge car on any Amtrak train operating six hours or longer. Effective April 1, 1974, the Interstate Commerce Commission also adapted this regulation in addition to other requirements such as proper dining facilities, adequate reservation system, proper heating and air conditioning functions, etc.

"I rode the April 5th and 6th and found the train to be in violation of the lounge car regulation and, since Amtrak failed to correct the problem, I instituted a test case to force the corporation to perform as required by law," Mr. Lannes explained.

"I will take Amtrak to court on each and every violation I experience in the future and I hope my victory will give other dissatisfied passengers the initiative to go to court to force Amtrak to operate their trains in a satisfactory manner.

"My intention in taking Amtrak to court is certainly not for monetary gain, but to speed up Amtrak's sluggish progress in providing a quality level of service," he added.

The case is significant since a court of law has forced Amtrak to refund train tickets for failing to supply an advertised product, the lounge car. Therefore, it would appear that any passenger riding an Amtrak train not equipped as advertised are entitled to a complete refund.

A rate increase and a summer surcharge went into effect June 9 on Amtrak's western runs, but even so the family-plan fare for four by rail from Chicago to Los Angeles will be \$265.50, compared with \$460 by air. The train has advantages over car or bus travel too. At the 55-mph speed limit, it will now take four days to drive the 2,194 miles from Chicago to Los Angeles; with motels, and with ever-rising gasoline prices, the American Automobile Association estimates that the drive could cost a family of four as much as \$340. Going straight through by bus, an uncomfortable means of long-distance travel, takes 54 hours—13 hours longer than the train—and costs \$233.70 for a family of four.

FRIENDS OF THE RAILROAD PASSENGER

Congressman Charles Whalen

Congressman Charles W. Whalen, Jr., of Dayton, Ohio, believes that in the not-to-distant future, 120-mile per hour trains may be whisking passengers through a "corridor" between Cleveland, Columbus, Springfield, Dayton and Cincinnati.

A strong supporter of legislation to upgrade Amtrak, Congressman Whalen believes in the future of railroad passenger service.

"The traveling public should have the option of rail service which is convenient, economical and appealing," Mr. Whalen said. "The airlines have increased the number of their passengers annually because the service they provide meets these criteria.

"Yet an enormous portion of the populace still relies on the private automobile, disdaining the airplane for a variety of reasons. It is this market that can be tapped by the train.

"If an eight-hour car trip could be replaced by a four-hour ride in an inexpensive comfortable train, people would think twice. The success of rail passenger service in Europe and Japan is contemporary proof.

"Amtrak will require years to come even close to restoring the rails to the level of popularity they enjoyed in the first half of this century.

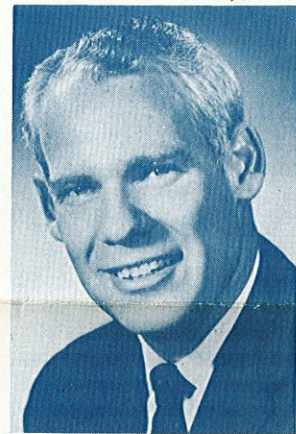
"But the accomplishments to date, limited in scope, seem to presage the strong prospect of a substantial revitalization and reliance on passenger trains.

"Congress recognizes the possibility and reflected this awareness in the 357-37 Amtrak Improvement Act vote in the House of Representatives on September 6, 1973," he stated.

Congressman Whalen, a former professor of economics at the University of Dayton, is serving his fourth term as a member of the House, where he serves on the Foreign Affairs Committee.

He is the author of a new book on the press "shield" issue and one on how to end the draft, published in 1967.

He is a veteran of World War II. He and Mrs. Whalen have four sons and two daughters.



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At Washington, D.C.

NEWS from NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

417 New Jersey Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003

Published monthly except during November by the National Association of Railroad Passengers. Phone 202-546-1550.

Vol. 8, No. 4

May-June, 1974

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Subscription is through payment of a membership fee to NARP, part of which applies to a one-year subscription to this publication.

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