



from
**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
RAILROAD PASSENGERS**

Vol. 5, No. 6



June, 1971

RIDING WITH AMTRAK

The following is a representative roundup of opinion on Amtrak as reported to NARP by its members and the news media:

"A good thing happened to the Detroit-Chicago Penn Central passenger trains this month — they began running on time and even ahead of schedule." — Detroit News reporter Ted Douglas, May 23, 1971.

"Since Amtrak took charge of the trains, complaints about railroad passenger service have been cut in half. The reason being that railroad passenger service itself has been cut in half. Right at the outset, Amtrak took the position that if a passenger service no longer existed, people would stop complaining that it was poorly operated." — UPI reporter Dick West in a "Lighter Side" column, June, 1971.

"The official train consist reports show that certain cars on the Spirit of St. Louis were without air conditioning every single day between June 5 and 13. The windows leak. The diner lacks refrigeration sometimes. The list is endless." — letter to NARP from Penn Central employee.

"I appreciate your taking the time to express your concern to me regarding rail passenger service in this country, and I will certainly talk with Secretary Volpe about the deplorable situation." — Martha Mitchell in a letter to NARP member Mrs. M. Earl Eargle, Thunderbolt, Ga.

"Hundreds of passengers aboard the train bound for Los Angeles yesterday afternoon had to ride standing up in the aisles. A few who refused to take the train if they were not given seats (cont'd. on p. 2)

SOUTHERN PACIFIC SERVICE MAY BE IMPROVING UNDER AMTRAK!

The Southern Pacific R.R. has a record of running a lousy passenger service.

In 1967, NARP reported in a comprehensive study that "The S.P. intends to discontinue all intercity passenger service as soon as possible. The company is in the midst of a massive and deceptive campaign to convince its stockholders, its shippers, the federal and state regulatory authorities, and the general public that such a course is essential for the health of the company, the benefit of its shippers, and even the economic well-being of the west."

Indicators now exist which show that Amtrak may not tolerate long-standing S.P. passenger practices.

Rolland Graham, excursion director of the Pacific Railroad Society has indicated to NARP that Amtrak was primarily responsible for the success of its latest special train out of Los Angeles. He said, "Such operations have been subject to unending harassment by the railroads involved. . . Amtrak forced the S.P. to back down on their refusal to handle [our special train]." He added that Mr. Scott McBride at Amtrak "took only 48 hours to achieve this goal."

Oakland, Ca., member Steve Lannes reports that he tele-

EXPANSION OF PASSENGER SYSTEM CONTINUED AS AMTRAK FILLS THREE TOP POSITIONS

Experimental tri-weekly train service was inaugurated between Minneapolis and Spokane on June 14 by Amtrak. In a press statement, Amtrak President Roger Lewis said that the line will be kept in operation until Sept. 1, 1972, "to take advantage of two summer seasons and heavy vacation travel throughout the area."

"Under the Amtrak Act, the Corporation may experiment with service outside of the basic system at anytime. Such trains are operated on a provisional basis and can be discontinued if, after a reasonable period of time, the public does not utilize the services provided," Lewis said.

It was learned that Amtrak had held discussions with the National Park Service of the Dept. of Interior on the importance of train service to Yellowstone National Park. The agency stressed the need for train service to help ease a growing auto congestion and pollution problem.

Reports are now circulating in Washington that service on the Baltimore & Ohio route between Washington, D.C., and Parkersburg, W.Va., will be restored in September.

Meanwhile, three additional vice presidents have been appointed to the Corporation. (cont'd. on p. 3)

New Train Schedules

Members desiring revised Amtrak schedules should write directly to: Amtrak, 955 L'Enfant Plaza, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20024. NARP will not have a large supply on hand and requests can be handled most expeditiously by Amtrak.

gramed Amtrak and Senator John V. Tunney (D-Ca.) about S.P. service deficiencies and Amtrak responded by ordering S.P. to immediately add a lounge car to the Coast Daylight.

Editor James Russell wrote in the June 7, 1971, Rail Travel Newsletter that "There has been a good deal of praise for the improved consists of long-haul trains such as the City of San Francisco. The latter reportedly has lately been carrying four sleepers, and runs 70-80% filled."

However, Rep. Lionel Van Deerlin (D-Ca.) received a letter from a constituent, Oliver H. Williamson of Del Mar, which said that the Coast Daylight was due to arrive in San Jose where "there were about 30 passengers with approximately 120 pieces of luggage lined up aside track 5. But the train came in on track 1, requiring the S.P. to move the commuter cars stored there. Meanwhile, a grouchy looking fellow riding on an electric baggage cart and armed with a bull horn shouted at us to pick up our luggage, go down the ramp, through the subway, up the ramp and board the train at track 1. The smart Alec never offered to load a single piece of luggage onto his cart — not even for the oldest or weakest."

It seems evident that Amtrak will have to continue to exercise diligence and persistence if S.P. service is to become first-rate.

NARP IN THE NEWS

Riding With Amtrak (from p. 1)
were told to take the bus or airline. — San Diego Union, June 1,
1971.

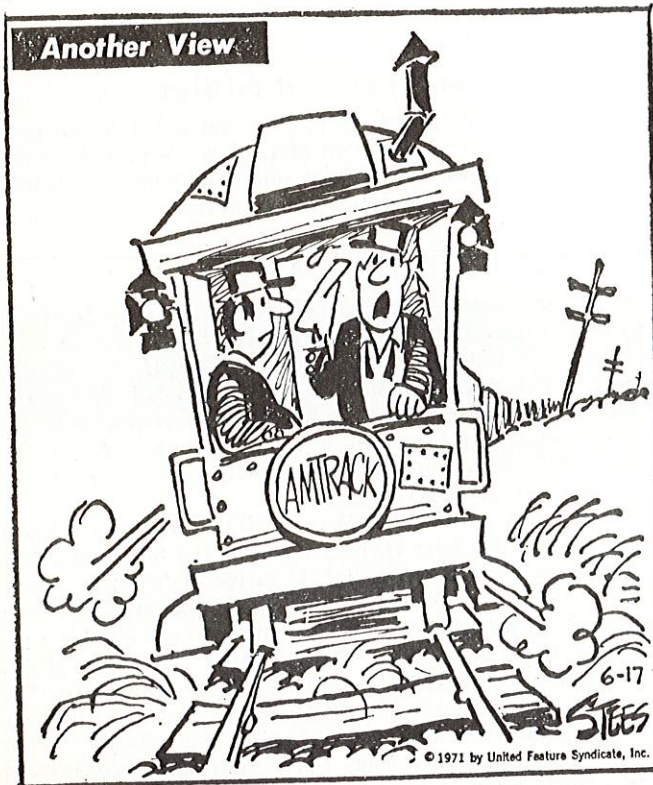
"In the great concern over the condition of passenger cars, many people have overlooked the condition of what propels them, namely, locomotives. Examination of the passenger-power now in operation has revealed that the power is quite often in worse shape than the equipment. [Locomotives] are entering their third decade, and are often incapable of performing their task except when lashed up in costly multiples of three, four, even six units." — Editor Kevin McKinney, Passenger Train Journal, Spring, 1971, issue.

"A Missouri Pacific R.R. official in Kansas City said, 'This is the schedule the Amtrak operating department in Washington has given us and we are living up to it.' He said the M.P. train has been leaving Kansas City on time at 5:30 a.m., five minutes before the Santa Fe train arrives." — A.P. dispatch, May 27, 1971.

"Amtrak recognizes, as its objective, a unification of its national reservation, credit card, ticketing, baggage, fare structure and schedule systems as soon as possible, thus eliminating Amtrak's dependence on the procedures and practices of each of the individual railroads participating in Amtrak operations." — Senator Gordon Allott (R-Colo.), May 21, 1971.

"Six weeks have passed, and there's no change. Nothing is different. People have tried, with renewed enthusiasm, to make long-haul reservations without success. Many others have taken a train instead of a plane, but vowed 'never again, and this time it's for keeps.' Not one frank, apologetic advertisement has appeared. Not one candid, here's-how-it-is news conference has been held. If Amtrak had taken the public behind the scenes... had explained the problems, said it was sorry, and asked for continued faith... the public would have understood and tried again another day." — PR Reporter Editor Robert L. Barbour, June 14, 1971.

"We expect our attempts at upgrading service will continue to discover problems, old or new, and the more information we at



"THE air-conditioning is now working. Somehow I managed to open a window."

The Association has received a tremendous amount of coverage in the past several months because of its court efforts and activities on Capitol Hill. United Press International and Associated Press have carried significant stories. The Trenton Times printed a feature article on NARP. Favorable mention was made in U.S. News & World Report and The National Observer. WIBW-FM Radio (Topeka, Kansas) gave editorial support to NARP.

Los Angeles Times/Newsday syndicated columnist Nick Timmesch wrote about Amtrak and said, "Other than an earnest outfit like the National Assn. of Railroad Passengers, there is little real action on behalf of the kind of rail passenger system a first-rate nation like the United States should have."

The most unusual and entertaining story to cross our desks came from the Springfield, Vermont, Times Reporter. The newspaper ran a feature story on Charley Hunter, a 12-year-old NARP member who expressed hope that Amtrak will operate better trains.

Meanwhile, several members have purchased advertising space for NARP with their own funds. William H. Francis, Bloomfield, N.J., arranged for an ad to appear in the Bloomfield Independent Press. Paul E. Anuta, W. Lafayette, Ind., and 15 others sponsored an ad in the Travel Section of the Indianapolis Sunday Star. J. D. Meehan, President of Modern Communication, a Pittsburgh public relations firm, designed a special ad for NARP and placed it in Typographic, a local magazine.

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.

Amtrak headquarters can receive from the traveling public, the Congress, and the railroad employees — who have much to contribute — the more corrections we will be able to make." — Amtrak Vice President Gerald D. Morgan in a letter to a Congressman.

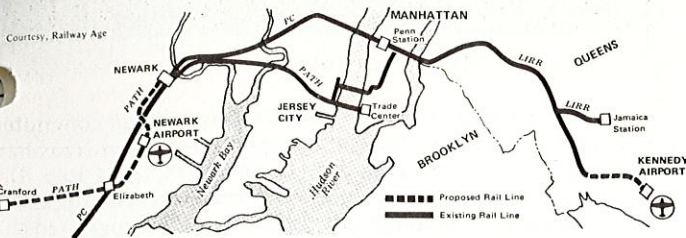
"Train passengers thought they could settle down and stop worrying about where their next coach was coming from when the new Amtrak plan went into effect. . . But there are still a great many kinks to be ironed out. For one thing, the White House has loaded up Amtrak with officials who don't really favor the Amtrak idea. There are no long range plans to buy new cars. And worst of all, some of the railroads are giving Amtrak zero cooperation. As one example, Western Pacific sent a memo around to its employees telling them not even to talk about the railroad with Amtrak representatives." — Reporter Les Whittier on the Jack Anderson radio show in Washington, D.C.

"The car stank of sweat and unflushed toilets, and a generation of use and neglect. The lights, those that worked, were dim. With the inside temperature at 101 degrees, the air-conditioning didn't work at all. . . It looked like a refugee train, but it wasn't. It was a Pullman car on the New Orleans to Los Angeles run of Amtrak. . . By 9 p.m., seven hours after the air-conditioning quit, all the passengers had been driven from the hot Pullman, some of them into the diner where they sat singing, off key, to the Glen Campbell tune, 'By the time I get to Phoenix, I'll be dying. . .'" — A.P. Reporter John S. Lang, dispatch of May 26, 1971.

"We're making the trains worth traveling again." — Slogan used in Amtrak newspaper advertisements.

"With all the consolidations of trains it is impossible to obtain tour space or even handle all individual requests unless steps are taken to split [the Super Chief-El Capitan] during periods of heavy travel. As a rail tour wholesaler, our income is derived 100% from the operation of our tours and not being able to obtain space will very effectively put us out of business before this year is up." — Edmund J. Von Nordeck, president of "Let Travel Tours," Perris, Ca., in a letter to Amtrak.

NEW RAIL LINES TO BE CONSTRUCTED



ZIP FROM NEW YORK TO AIRPORTS — the Port of New York Authority has announced plans to finance and construct high-speed rail links from mid-town Manhattan to Kennedy International Airport and from Newark to Newark Airport at a total cost upwards of \$410-million. By using existing tracks of the Long Island R.R. and constructing an extension into a new Kennedy airport terminal, air travelers will be provided with direct 16-minute service from Penn Station. The line to Newark Airport will utilize the present PATH route, with extensions to the airport and suburban areas.

Expansion (from p. 1)

Harold L. Graham, formerly vice president-service, Pan American World Airways, was named vice-president-marketing. Gerald D. Morgan, a partner in a Washington, D.C., law firm and White House assistant in the Eisenhower administration, was appointed vice president-Government Affairs. Kenneth A. Houseman, assistant postmaster general in the bureau of personnel, became vice president-personnel and administration.

Lewis added that key appointments in operations, legal and finance would be made shortly.

In other developments, Amtrak experienced its first serious accident as the *City of New Orleans* derailed in Tontit, Ill., leaving 11 people dead and nearly half of the 224 aboard injured. Railroad officials attributed the accident to a locomotive wheel that cracked — probably because of electrical failure — and struck a crossing mechanism on the track.

Los Angeles-based Western Airlines proposed a cooperative program with Amtrak "in support of the effort to strengthen rail service." In a letter to Amtrak, Western's vice president of marketing, Arthur F. Kelly, proposes air-rail promotion of Western travel with joint tours, ticketing, interline agreements, and acceptance of each carrier's exchange orders.

Labor trouble brewed when — on May 15 — Amtrak abolished free passes for railroad workers, requiring all employees to pay half fare for themselves and their families when traveling by train on personal business. When that policy was proposed for Penn Central, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers threatened to strike the railroad. The issue is still unresolved.

RAILROADS ARE VITAL — DOT officials estimated that a nationwide railroad strike lasting two weeks would result in losses to economic output representing 5.8% of the Gross National Product.

MAY WE HAVE YOUR OPINION?

In recent months, there has been increasing discussion of the possibility of government ownership and operation (nationalization) of the railroads. Do You (check one)

1. Favor railroad nationalization as a general proposition? _____
2. Oppose nationalization as a general proposition, but would be willing to accept it if it seemed the only way to get modern passenger service? _____
3. Absolutely oppose nationalization? _____

Special comment: _____

Please complete this form and return to NARP. Thanks!

New Amtrak Schedules

7:00 p.m.	Lv. Minneapolis	Ar.	6:20 a.m.
3:05 a.m.	Lv. Bismarck	Lv.	9:55 p.m.
10:50 a.m.	Lv. Billings	Lv.	1:05 p.m.
3:50 p.m.	Lv. Butte	Lv.	7:55 a.m.
10:00 p.m.	Ar. Spokane	Lv.	11:30 p.m.

Leaves Minneapolis every Mon., Wed., Sat. Leaves Spokane every Mon., Wed., Fri.

WHAT IS EASIER TO BUY — AN AMTRAK OR AIRPLANE TICKET?

A sample of NARP's mail concerning purchase of train tickets:

"Truth is stranger than fiction! . . . I asked the operator if there was a number I could use to reach train information. She gave me 471-8751. I tried that number and believe it or not I got the correct time! Obviously I misdialed and tried again. No mistake. Amtrak may not have a telephone number or fare information but they do have a sense of humor. Mr. Kendall, I ask you, 'is this any way to run a railroad?'" — Thomas J. Healey, Parma, Ohio, in a letter to Amtrak.

"When I called the ticket agent at Pittsburgh, the first change became evident — he was courteous and seemed even eager to sell me reservations." — Rev. Everett I. Campbell, Ph.D., Pittsburgh, Pa., in a letter to Amtrak.

"A friend of mine, who is a railfan, attempted to purchase parlor car seats on the inland Boston-New York route. He was told that there was no such train or parlor service whereupon he took out his copy of the **Official Guide** and showed the agent (Penn Station ticket sales) the train as listed. The agent responded that "it must be a misprint." After a bit more discussion and argument the agent checked and admitted the existence of the service and the sale was completed. But of course the average traveler is not a railfan and does not carry an **Official Guide**." — Foster Gunnison, Jr., Hartford, Conn., in a letter to Amtrak.

"After all that trouble buying the ticket, the man told me if I had any complaints I should call the federal government." — Miss Donna Scifres, Lansing, Michigan.

"We contacted the Amtrak number in Palo Alto and were told that there was no provision for agents to handle sales and reservations. Result — we have turned away about 40 inquiries for reservations in the past month. I feel that without the help of reliable agencies your efforts will be badly hampered." — letter to NARP from E. W. Walser, Walser Travel Service, Modesto, Ca.

"I've sold tickets to several people who are new customers for Amtrak — they haven't rode a train in years. But when they see what pulls into the station, they turn right around and get a refund rather than ride what looks like a pile of junk." — letter to NARP from Penn Central R.R. employee.

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. I understand that I will receive a monthly newsletter and other material.

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

(Please Print)

Name _____

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.

RECENT COMMUTER FARE INCREASES

(For story, see "Friend of the Railroad Passenger")

Requests Pending				
Date of Request	Railroad	Metropolitan Area	% Increase	No. Daily Riders
5/13/71	SP	San Francisco	10	11,500
5/3/71	PRSL	Phila.-N.J.	10	200
5/1/71	IC	Chicago	7	42,000
3/30/71	E-L	N.J.-N.Y.	15	35,000
3/10/71	BN	Chicago	6	20,000
to be announced	LI	New York	*	260,000

Requests Approved				
Date of Request	Railroad	Metropolitan Area	% Increase	No. Daily Riders
5/29/71	MILW	Chicago	5-10	23,000
5/1/71	PC	N.Y. (Hudson line)	25	13,000
5/1/71	PC	N.Y. (Harlem line)	10	29,000
5/1/71	PC	Chicago	25	400
5/1/71	C&NW	Chicago	7	90,000
4/5/71	B&O	Balt./Wash., D.C.	7	1,000
4/1/71	CSS&SB	Chicago-N. Ind.	75	9,000
4/1/71	PC	Balt./Wash., D.C.	25	250
3/1/71	PC	Philadelphia	10	70,000
3/1/71	RDG	Philadelphia	10	48,000
1/71	CNJ	Intrastate N.J.	15	30,000
1/71	PC	Intrastate N.J.	25	7,000
12/70	PC	N.J.-N.Y.	25	26,000
11/70	B&O	Pittsburgh	10	1,000
11/1/70	CRI&P	Chicago	6	26,000
9/1/70	B&M	Boston	10	25,000
8/70	E-L	Cleveland	35	250

Requests Withdrawn Voluntarily By R.R.

2/15/71	GTW	Detroit	5-10	1,400
				Total number of riders affected: 769,000
				Total number of fare increases: 23

*It is anticipated that the Long Island R.R. increase will be at least 10%.

CANADIAN NATIONAL will spend \$8.5-million to upgrade its passenger car fleet within the next two years. More than 1,000 cars will undergo heavy shopping or accelerated maintenance. Many will be given bright interiors. CN is also emphasizing personnel training and on-time passenger train performance.

"SOUTHERN PACIFIC CO. has announced plans to build a new \$65 million headquarters office building in San Francisco. The building will feature two office towers, one 43 and the other 28 stories high. An unfriendly observer wonders whether the new building will have only freight elevators." — Eugene (Ore.) Register-Guard, May 24, 1971.

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 at the above address. Phone 202-546-1550.

Vol. 5, No. 6

June, 1971

Anthony Haswell, *Chairman*
Joseph Vranich, *Executive Director*

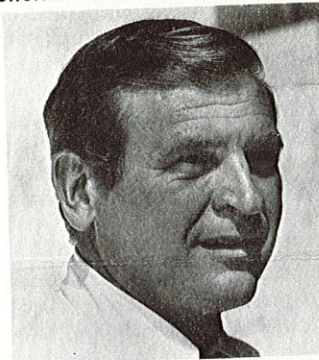
Subscription is through membership in NARP.

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

FRIENDS OF THE RAILROAD PASSENGER

Rep. Dan Rostenkowski

"Within the past 11 months, 769,000 daily railroad commuters riding 24 different lines in several large metropolitan areas have been confronted by requests for fare increases," said Rep. Dan Rostenkowski (D-Ill.) in a June 17 House speech supporting federal assistance to urban commuter systems. He suggested higher fares are a "self-defeating proposition" since some of the clientele are necessarily driven away.



He urged passage of the Emergency Commuter Relief Act to "assist materially in establishing reasonable fares for decent service on the commuter systems." The legislation has 100 co-sponsors on the House side and 100 on the Senate side, with some possibility that the House Banking & Currency Committee will hold hearings soon. The bill is co-sponsored by Rep. Harrison A. Williams (D-N.Y.) and Chairman Percy (R-Ill.).

"Railroad commuter systems," said Mr. Rostenkowski, "experienced a moderate 1% increase in ridership in 1970 over 1969, while revenues increased by 6.6%. In 1970, 4,592,000,000 passenger-miles were attributable to commuter trains, an increase of 36 million over the 1969 figure of 4,546,000,000. Commuter revenue for 1970 was \$172,301,000, an increase of \$10,723,000 over the 1969 revenue of \$161,576,000. This is another indicator that people are paying more to ride commuter trains."

The Emergency Commuter Relief Act would provide \$75 million annually for five years to help defray costs of interest on principal in purchase or lease of mass transit equipment. An additional \$75 million would be authorized yearly to meet emergency caused by operating deficits that threaten to close down necessary bus and train systems.

Mr. Rostenkowski has been a Representative since 1958.

In San Francisco, NARP Regional Chairman Scott Sorenson formed the California Association of Railroad Passengers, as a nucleus the Bay Area membership of NARP. The new organization will move with greater speed and independence of local concern.

Application to Mail at special rate of postage rates is pending approval by the Post Office, Washington, D.C.

RETURN REQUESTED