

AMTRAK OPPOSES MIDWEST TO FLORIDA AUTO-TRAIN

A second auto-train, running from Louisville, Kentucky, to Central Florida, is being planned by Auto-Train Corporation in conjunction with Seaboard Coast Line Railroad.

However, Amtrak opposes the new service.

The original auto-train, which shuttles travelers from a point just south of Washington, D.C. and Sanford, Florida, has been carrying both passengers and their cars since December, 1971.

Eugene K. Garfield, president of Auto-Train, announced the new line, which must be approved by the Interstate Commerce Commission.

"It'll take us about a year to get ready," said Mr. Garfield, a 37-year-old former Federal Transportation Department official who once read a report suggesting the possibility of such a service, raised the capital to start it, and is now nominally a multi-millionaire from his stockholdings in the company.

Patterned after similar trains in Europe, the Auto-Train functions much like an overland ocean ferry: Automobiles are driven into multi-deck boxcars; their drivers and passengers travel in conventional passenger accommodations, and car and occupants are reunited at the end of the trip. The Auto-Train Corporation broke into the black less than six months after starting service.

Its management says the trains have carried more than 250,000 people and 90,000 cars in the last 18 months, and that many of its trains next winter and spring are already sold out.

Currently, the company runs one train nightly in each direction. They leave Lorton and Sanford at 8 P.M. for a 15-hour, 900-mile trip. The company said last week that it would increase

Anthony Haswell, chairman of NARP, has appealed to Congress to clarify the Amtrak law in a manner which would abolish Amtrak's virtual monopoly on railroad passenger service in the United States.

"Private enterprise that results in such successful service as the National Capitol to Florida auto-train should not be discouraged," says Mr. Haswell. "On the contrary, it should be national policy to encourage such beneficial competition."

Mr. Haswell believes Amtrak's opposition to the proposed auto-on-train service from Louisville, Ky., to Sanford, Florida (near Disney World) is "a violation of the spirit, if not the letter, of the antitrust laws."

"NARP feels that Amtrak should not oppose Auto-Train's new service. In addition, Congress should vote promptly to amend the Amtrak law, so this type of controversy cannot develop in the future," he concludes.

"We are not being unreasonable about this," said Ed Edel, Amtrak's vice president — public relations. "In fact, we have been very cooperative with Auto-Train in the past, and have even leased equipment to them. But we feel that we must obey the law as it now stands."

this capacity by 50 per cent on June 30. Every other day a second train will leave each city.

Passengers pay \$190 for a one-way trip on the Auto-Train. This pays for transporting one car and two persons. Others in a family can go along for \$20 apiece.

Passengers are given a free buffet dinner, a mid-night snack and a continental breakfast. They can watch free late-run movies, play games, or spend some time in a cocktail lounge or a vista-dome "night club" car, where a crew member plays the piano and coaxes passengers to participate in sing-alongs.

Most passengers sleep on reclining chairs, although Pullman sleeping accommodations are available for \$40 extra.

Travel authorities credit the unusual economic success of the line to several factors, including the following:

— A fast-growing volume of travel between the Northeast and



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Florida, much of it by people who make the same trip every year.

— The desire of many Florida-bound travelers — especially older Northeasterners who spend their winters there, and families headed for Disney World and other vacation spots — to have their own cars for inexpensive local transportation.

— The operation on only a single popular route. The Auto-Train does not have to subsidize losses on marginally traveled routes, a problem that traditionally hounds passenger transportation lines.

— The newness of the venture. It has managed to avoid inflated operating costs caused by union-enforced featherbedding contracts found on many older railroads. Employees recently voted down a proposal to become unionized.

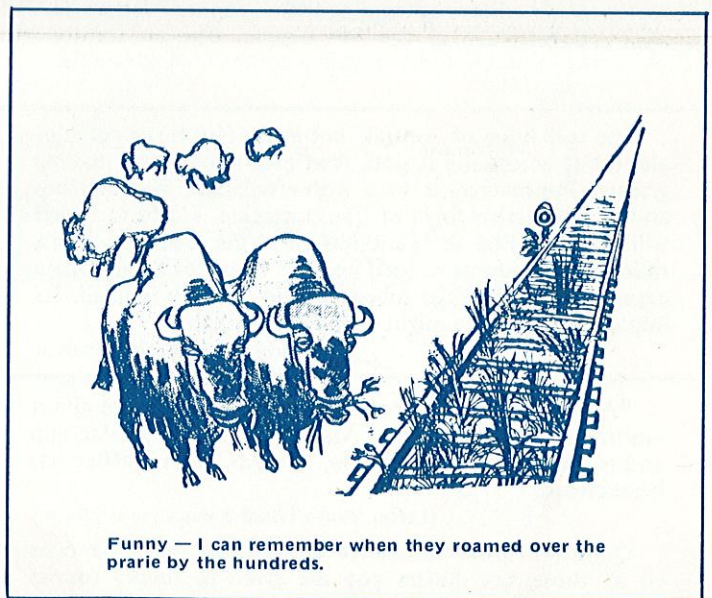
Why was Louisville chosen as terminus for the new service? Mr. Garfield pointed to a map of the Northeast and said:

"This area is like a big funnel, moving south. People are willing to drive down from Canada, Boston, New York, Philadelphia and other places to catch the train at Lorton."

He said he expected a similar pattern to develop in the Middle West, with Florida-bound motorists driving from Chicago, Cincinnati, St. Louis and other points to catch a train at Louisville.

Threats of a gasoline shortage are expected to stir interest in expanding the auto-train concept. Mr. Garfield said he would like some day to run an Auto-Train between Chicago and Denver. But as a practical matter, Federal legislation gives Amtrak the right to initiate such services in most of the country.

Amtrak is trying to introduce a kind of auto-train service between Los Angeles and Seattle. But the Southern Pacific Company, which operates Amtrak trains on this route, has refused to do so. The dispute is now in court.



Courtesy Dayton Daily News

NARP PROPOSES IMPROVED AMTRAK ROUTES

(Maps on next page)

Bus Owners Fight Amtrak With 'Free Newspaper Space'

An extensive campaign against Amtrak is being waged by the National Association of Motor Bus Owners (NAMBO). The campaign consists of "canned" letters to the editor, "canned" letters to Congressmen, "canned" letters to local Chambers of Commerce, "canned" speeches and mass distribution of anti-Amtrak literature aboard Greyhound buses.

"MAKE USE OF FREE NEWSPAPER SPACE" NAMBO urges its members, in a newsletter signed by its president, Charles A. Webb.

Mr. Webb's letter states (exact quote):

"Make Use of Free Newspaper Space"

One effective and inexpensive way to get our story across to the general public is through news releases and letters to the editor. A sample letter to the editor is attached for your use.

Another approach is to use your news release or letter to the editor to answer pro-AMTRAK articles, editorials or letters. Attached are examples of a news release issued by the Vermont Transit Co. rebutting an AMTRAK news release and a letter to the editor that ran in the Burlington (Vt.) Free Press.

Using information in these monthly newsletters, urge others in your company to send letters to the editor."

Certainly, employees of NAMBO member firms have been following Mr. Webb's advice, with great success, to judge by newspaper clippings coming in to NARP from all over the country, indicating that the UNCHANGED SAMPLE LETTER has been sent to and accepted by newspapers throughout the land (usually signed by the name of the local bus manager).

Fortunately, the NAMBO campaign appears to be backfiring, as many Congressmen are taking note of the "canned" letters approach as "artificial". Also, private individuals are writing letters to the editor in response to the "canned" NAMBO letters, and they are all different, but in general, they effectively expose the NAMBO campaign.

NARP has not and will not take advantage of the nation's busy newspaper editors by sending them "canned" letters. NARP deplores the attitude of the bus people, who apparently will stoop to any tactics in order to gain a commercial advantage.

The real value of Amtrak, not in the Northeast corridor alone but across the nation, is in maintaining and making gradual improvements in a high-efficiency, high-dependability alternative form of transportation — a form which will be needed by the nation again in the future, and on a rational basis seems needed now. In terms of total dollars expended the national investment in Amtrak is small. Its impact in the future might well be incalculable.

—Akron, Ohio, Beacon Journal

"American Express in London has no literature about Amtrak and informs us that Amtrak has virtually folded-up and is a complete failure. Also, the U.S. tourist office has been closed."

(Letter from a London magazine publisher)

Question to the Commerce Department: What happens to all those tax dollars you are given to supply tourist information abroad?

NARP has submitted proposals to Congress for greatly improved Amtrak passenger train service between the Midwest and Florida and between the East Coast and the Midwest.

The proposals were made in testimony before the House Commerce Committee by Anthony Haswell, chairman of NARP. Mr. Haswell said "We believe Chicago-Florida passenger service should be continued, substantially improved and expanded in order to reach more people."

"In addition, we believe that service between St. Louis and Kansas City should be continued and speeded-up.

"We also feel that, if Amtrak goes through with its plan to discontinue St. Louis-Pittsburgh service, it should be replaced with a new connecting service linking Columbus and Dayton to the East Coast, as part of a general restructuring of East-Midwest service."

Mr. Haswell testified that "There is a definite need and potential for corridor train service between St. Louis (population over one million) and Kansas City (population 2,363,000). Half way between these points is the state capital of Jefferson City. Track is in excellent condition.

"One round trip per day can provide good connections both between St. Louis and the West Coast and between Kansas City and Florida."

He also told the committee that Amtrak's operations of the Chicago-Miami train have been very poor. "During the first three weeks of 1972, only one train operated on time, and trains were

ITALY TO REVAMP TRAINS — Italian State Railways plans to spend nearly \$6,900,000,000 over 10-year period to renovate Italy's rail transportation system.

—Travel Magazine

an average of over two hours late. . . Amtrak responded. . . by lengthening the schedule by four hours southbound, six hours northbound. Yet even with this timetable, on-time performance through October, 1972, was a wretched 55 percent.

"Under the circumstances, it is quite understandable that Chicago-Miami trains are poorly-patronized and incur large deficits."

Instead of the present route, NARP proposes a change south of Thomasville, Georgia. "Instead of running east through Waycross and Jacksonville, the route should turn south through Perry, Florida, to Plant City (20 miles west of Tampa). From Plant City, connecting bus/limo service could fan out to Tampa, Clearwater, St. Petersburg and Sarasota. The train would continue from Plant City to Lakeland, Palm Beach, Ft. Lauderdale and Miami." NARP claims the new schedule would cut almost 10 hours from the Chicago-Miami run.

In the case of the proposed St. Louis-Kansas City route, NARP says "These trains should be promptly returned to the five-hour schedule operated for many years as the *Colorado Eagle*. This route is a prime candidate for high speed service with advanced equipment."

NARP states that the first step in restructuring East-Midwest service is to route the *Broadway Limited* (New York to Chicago) via Cleveland, which now has no Amtrak service at all. This would also provide train service to Toledo. NARP would like to see a connecting rail service operated between Toledo and Detroit.

NARP also proposes that one pair of Amtrak's "Empire Service" trains between New York and Buffalo be extended to Chicago, to provide service between upstate New York and the Midwest.

"Amtrak plans to continue operating a pair of day trains between Pittsburgh and New York in addition to the *Broadway*. If the New York-Buffalo trains were extended to Chicago, as we have suggested, it would be rather easy to link the Pittsburgh-New York day trains to Chicago by extending them to Youngstown and Cleveland."

Amtrak Gets Tough With Penn Central RR

Showing its new "tough" policy once again, Amtrak has blasted the Penn Central Railroad for allegedly submitting false on-time reports and overestimating its charges to Amtrak, as well as underestimating the revenues it was supposed to forward to Amtrak.

The charges were made in a brief filed at the Interstate Commerce Commission which stated that the data covering on-time performance were "simply too high to be accounted for on the basis of random clerical errors." It also said there was some indication that PC had altered some train dispatching sheets, which would be a violation of ICC regulations.

Penn Central said it had no comment but would reply later in detail to the ICC, which is considering PC's request for a large increase in payments for operating Amtrak passenger service over its lines.

Amtrak said a detailed investigation showed PC's on-time rate was far lower than PC reported, especially for the fast New York-Washington Metroliner, which ran on-time only 30.7 percent in April although PC reported it on-time 63.8 percent of the time.

Over-all for April, PC-operated Amtrak trains were on time only 53.4 percent of the time, while the railroad reported a 70.6 percent on-time performance.

The Amtrak figures show the Metroliner has suffered a marked deterioration in performance over the last year and a half, not reported by PC.

Actual on-time performance, with PC reported figures in parenthesis, were: November 1971-March 1972, 64.7 (79.6), April-September 1972, 47.9 (72.3), October 1972-March 1973, 50.7 (74.0), and April 1973, 30.7 (63.8).

The investigation was carried out by comparing the PC telex reports to Amtrak with train dispatching sheets, the daily record of each train dispatcher, and by on-the-spot investigations by Amtrak employees.

An audit complete for May through December 1971, shows that PC owed Amtrak \$9.9 million for over-reported expenses and \$2.2 million for under-reported revenues, the Amtrak brief said.

Aaron Lopez of Lakewood, Colorado, reports Amtrak progress: "I've noticed that more ticket agents are being hired and telephones are being answered sooner, with courtesy. Amtrak is doing more everyday for the frustrated railroad traveler."

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Robert J. Casey, Executive Director
Linda Sturgill, Executive Secretary

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FRIENDS OF THE RAILROAD PASSENGER

Congressman William H. Hudnut III

A recent article in *Railway Age*, entitled "Amtrak: Here to Stay—and Grow" was reprinted in full in the *Congressional Record* at the request of Congressman William H. Hudnut III.

"The Amtrak passenger service operation has been depicted by some as being an ailing operation," Mr. Hudnut said. "This article paints a different picture."

Representative Hudnut, who is one of only two Republican freshmen in Congress to be named to the powerful Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, noted that Amtrak operates a 1,200 unit fleet of stainless steel passenger cars some of which are undergoing refurbishing at nine locations, one of which is the Penn Central's shop at Beech Grove, Indiana, in Mr. Hudnut's district.

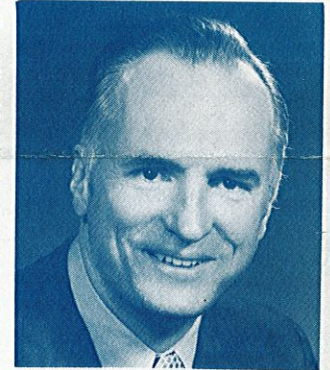
"The work being done at the shop constitutes an important contribution to the economy of my district and of central Indiana," the congressman pointed out.

Before his election to Congress, Mr. Hudnut, a Presbyterian clergyman, served as Senior Minister of the Second Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis for 10 years. Prior to that, he served churches in Buffalo, New York, and Annapolis, Maryland.

Born in Cincinnati, Ohio, October 17, 1932, Mr. Hudnut attended the Darrow School in New Lebanon, New York, where he is now president of the Board of Trustees. He graduated from Princeton University with high honors and elected to Phi Beta Kappa in 1954, and from Union Theological Seminary, summa cum laude in 1957. Two Indiana Colleges, Hanover and Wabash, have honored him with Doctorates.

As a citizen of Marion County, Congressman Hudnut has been active in the Marion County Mental Health Association, the Community Service Council, the Family Service Association, the Boy Scouts of America, Flanner House, the YMCA, Christian Theological Seminary, the Opportunities for Veterans program, and other volunteer community activities.

As a public office holder, he was a member of the Board of Public Safety from January 1, 1970 to December 31, 1972, and acting director of the Department in January, 1972.



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