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RETURN REQUESTED

AMTRAK LAG IN TODESBANDEN

Budget Director David Stockman's key Amtrak recommendation, FY '82 budget authority of \$613 million, has survived three important steps: it was included in the President's Feb. 18 budget submission, "America's New Beginning: A Program for Economic Recovery," and his Mar. 10 "Fiscal Year 1982 Budget Revisions;" and it was firmly endorsed by the Senate Budget Committee in two Mar. 17 votes and included in that committee's "reconciliation" package which was passed by the full Senate.

Thus, our headline, drafted on Good Friday with apologies to

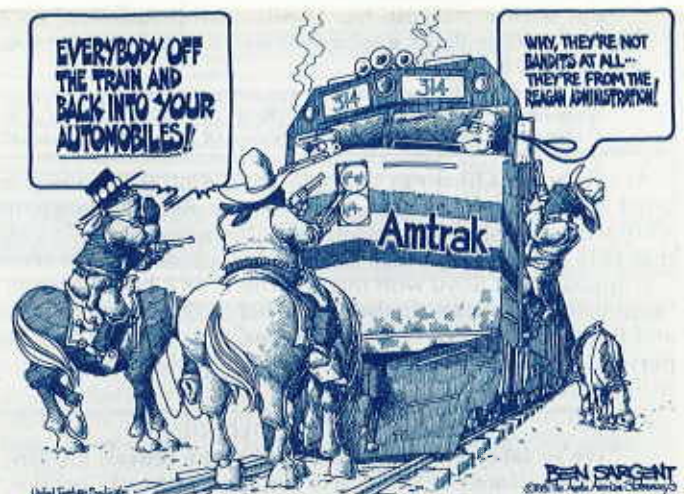


Ronald P. Boardman, Jr., a NARP Board member and Chicago investor, is also a member of the Republican Congressional Leadership Council. In that capacity, he met with President Ford in Palm Springs, CA, last September. Mr. Ford was interested enough in the rail passenger issue to take Boardman's copy of a recent speech by Robert J. Casey, executive director of the Ohio Rail Transportation Authority (and former NARP executive director). Janet Newport, another Council member, is at left.

J.S. Bach (translation: "Amtrak lay in the bonds of death"), is not cheerful. Hopefully, a loud clear message in support of rail passenger service is getting through to lawmakers as they listen to constituents during the April recess. But Senate Budget Chairman Pete V. Domenici (R-NM) was well aware of Amtrak's popularity in his home state when, near the start of the recess, he reaffirmed his support for the administration budget level.

His committee voted 21-1 and 16-6 against two amendments that would have added money above the \$613 million mark. First, Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (D-DE) proposed \$970 million for Amtrak—that agency's initial request—plus full Northeast Corridor Project funding. Then, J.J. Exon (D-NE) simply proposed \$853 million for Amtrak. If Congress permitted Amtrak to negotiate effectively with labor, Amtrak believes \$853 million would be adequate to run the system it proposed and which it believes would be consistent with the 1979 authorization.

(cont. on p. 2)



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TRAVELERS' ADVISORY—APRIL 26 CHANGES

Superliners are now on the Chicago-Texas "Inter-American," and the Seattle-Salt Lake City "Pioneer" carries a Superliner coach (switched at Ogden to/from Denver-Chicago). "Pioneer" now stops at Cascade Locks, OR, near the Cascade Locks Marine Park and the dock of the Columbia sightseer tour boat whose operating season begins May 23. The city and the Port of Cascade Locks paid for installation of the platform. The train now stops at Cache Jct., UT, near Logan, instead of Brigham City.

The Buffalo area gets its fourth daily round-trip to New York City, Niagara Falls its third. Speeded-up schedules feature a mid-afternoon departure from New York that reaches Buffalo in 7:36, 29 minutes faster than the 1957 "Empire State Express" even though the latter made fewer stops and traveled four fewer miles. The NY-Toronto train is called "Maple Leaf." Its 11:45 running-time is almost three hours faster than was the 1957 westbound daylight schedule, and 40 minutes faster than the eastbound.

With addition of the partly-state-funded "Fort Pitt," Amtrak offers three daily Altoona-Pittsburgh round-trips, and the "Pennsylvanian" equipment gets more utilization.

For the first time since Amtrak's 1971 startup, Michigan City, IN, is served—by the Chicago-Pt. Huron "Blue Water" and one Chicago-Detroit round-trip. Construction of Amtrak's planned Hammond, IN, station for all Indiana

(cont. on p. 4)

Amtrak Lag In Todesbanden (cont. from p. 1)

Nancy Landon Kassebaum (R-KS) joined Democrats Lawton Chiles (FL), Biden, Howard M. Metzenbaum (OH), and Daniel Patrick Moynihan (NY) in voting with Exon for his amendment. They deserve special thanks.

In early April, the House Budget Committee approved a resolution that assumed \$792 million for Amtrak. Conventional wisdom is that, if the Committee's package survives on the House floor, we'll end up with a compromise around \$700 million for Amtrak—and massive cuts from, but not elimination of, the nationwide system.

At the first Congressional hearing on Amtrak on Mar. 5 before Rep. James J. Florio (D-NJ), Secretary of Transportation Drew Lewis made clear that "we don't plan to follow OMB's program on how to run Amtrak," a reference to the Stockman "black book" call for rapid fare increases aimed at recovering 80% of total operating costs by the end of 1985.

WHAT DOES THE PRESIDENT THINK?

"I don't even know if Mr. Reagan is involved in this thing. That's a helluva good question. I got the feeling from talking to Lewis that he's got it in for Amtrak. He's blind about it. He'd just like to wipe it out.

"But let me tell you, the Smithsonian (Institution) isn't big enough for all the equipment we've bought for Amtrak in the last 10 years."

—Rep. Silvio O. Conte, Ranking Republican, House Appropriations Committee, interviewed for the excellent *Los Angeles Times* Mar. 29 feature, "America's Amtrak Rail System: All Aboard for Oblivion?"

At subsequent hearings during March, Amtrak President Alan Boyd and Federal Railroad Administrator Robert Blanchette—who was only confirmed on March 10—debated Boyd's claim that \$613 million would pay only for Northeast Corridor service.

It appears that Boyd won this argument. FRA has presented no "supportable contrary analysis" of what \$613 million would buy, and Boyd testified that FRA and General Accounting Office staff-people had reviewed Amtrak's figures and generally agreed with them.

BACK TO THE 13 COLONIES?

"We're faced with a statement that the federal government can afford \$613 million to run the Northeast Corridor, but it can't afford another \$240 million to run a 22,000-mile nationwide system. I have some difficulties with that."

—Amtrak President Alan S. Boyd, quoted in Apr. 4 *Harrisburg Patriot*

Early in the hearings, Blanchette appeared to believe that Congress would not demand to know what its money would buy, responding to such questions by saying that these should be "business decisions" of Amtrak management. NARP, in discussing this with the many interested reporters, characterized FRA's position as hoping Congress would vote the money now and learn what it would buy after it was too late.

By late March, it appeared that FRA was indeed resigned to doing some more map-drawing, and the Mar. 25 *Travel Management Daily* reported a proposed nationwide, skeletal system that DOT was allegedly studying.

Early in the process, Secretary Lewis made statements about "empty" trains, notably on ABC's *Good Morning America* of Mar. 26. Since the trains are generally jammed, NARP sent a mail-gram to him that night requesting that "you immediately cease and desist misrepresenting the facts about passenger train ridership in the United States. . . . This year's ridership growth is largely outside the Northeast. Space is hard to obtain with standing room only. You have taken an oath of office as Secretary of Transportation, not as Secretary of Automobiles. . . ."

This was read at a well-attended NARP news conference in Washington's National Press Club Building, carried on the national wire services, and run in many newspapers around the country. NARP has also received good coverage as the result of media interviews and conferences arranged by local members in conjunction with the recent trips of the NARP staff (see Jan. News, p. 4, for schedules). Barry Williams was greeted by the three

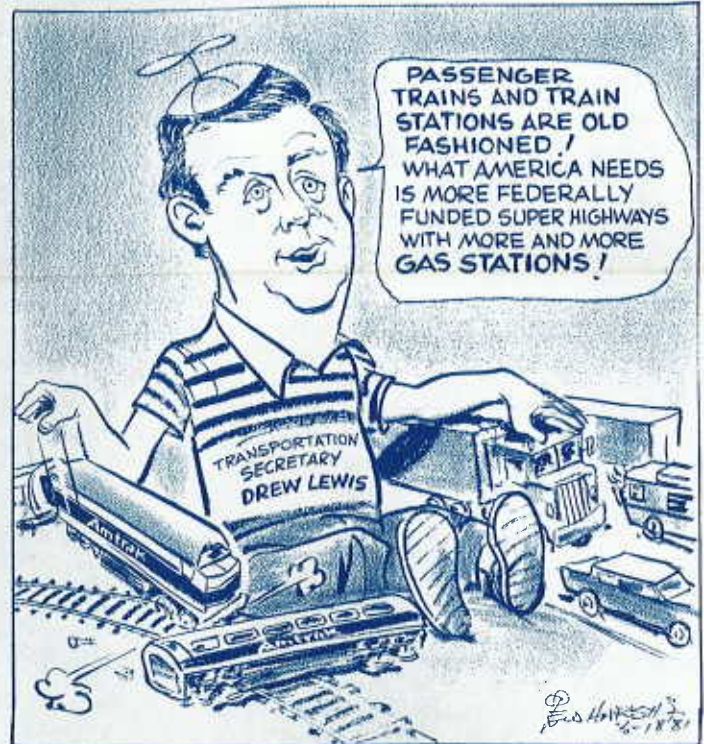
To reach any House or Senate office by telephone, you may call the Capitol Hill switchboard: 202/224-3121.

SUPERLINER UPDATE

As of April 1, Amtrak had received from Pullman all but 22 of 284 Superliner cars. Still to be delivered are 22 of 70 sleepers.

RECORD-BREAKING FEBRUARY

In February, Amtrak recorded its highest monthly on-time performance ever: 84.7%. In January, 81.1% of all Amtrak trains were on schedule.



TV networks' local affiliates in Oklahoma City, which lost its trains in 1979. In Ogden, UT, at 11:30 PM, reporters from two newspapers, one radio station, and one TV station (with camera crew) turned out to see Ross Capon, who was also met in Seattle by both major newspapers, two radio stations, and one TV crew.

Lewis has not recently repeated his statements that "nobody" is riding the trains. Perhaps he checked the figures more carefully instead of relying on preconceived notions or the work of DOT's long-established anti-rail bureaucracy.

But this has not changed his fundamental outlook. On Apr. 9, speaking at University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School, he was asked what use he saw for a nationwide rail passenger service. His answer: "None." He spoke of trimming Amtrak down to six to twelve corridors—but that was before DOT's release, the next day, of yet another strongly negative "emerging corridors" report.

Only one glimmer of hope has emerged from DOT—aside from Lewis's unprecedented acceptance of an invitation to address the NARP Board of Directors—a March 27 report by UPI's Don Phillips on an interview with Blanchette. Quoting in part from that release:

"Federal Railroad Administrator Robert Blanchette says he will cooperate with Congress and Amtrak to maintain a national passenger train system if it is made more efficient and is structured for passengers to pay at least half the cost of their trips.

"Blanchette. . . said President Reagan's barebones \$613 million Amtrak budget was not written in stone, and could be increased somewhat for efficient and needed trains."

Boyd says that, assuming successful labor negotiations, \$853 million would buy the full system Amtrak proposed—and a 50% revenues: costs ratio. NARP intends to do what it can to hold Blanchette to his words. ■

GETTING THERE—A NEW MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT

Millions of Americans are riding trains for the first time. But they're finding a dearth of information about train travel. Travel literature is still geared to the Automobile Age, so people miss many opportunities for carefree, car-free trips.

To fill this void, we're expanding the Travelers Advisory section of NARP News into Getting There, a 16-page quarterly journal devoted exclusively to travel information, ideas, and news. (The TA column will continue to appear in the monthly newsletter.) The first Getting There will reach you in May. You'll learn how travel agents serve both you and Amtrak. There will be features on Cincinnati, Boston's Museum Wharf near South Station, Oregon's Willamette Valley, a luxurious coastal cruise, and how to find English-style "B&B" lodging in the U.S. and Canada.

Amtrak's new passengers usually know little about Amtrak's political problems, let alone NARP's work. But as travelers they know about the need for better train travel information. We think Getting There will make NARP members out of them. Then, through NARP News, they'll learn what to do to help the trains survive.

NARP members will receive Getting There as a member benefit, just as they receive NARP News. "GT" is produced for NARP by Transport Research & Communication, Inc., all of whose principals are NARP members.

To become a permanent NARP service, GT must draw new members to NARP. Don't keep GT a secret. Take it with you when you travel. Share it with friends and colleagues. We think folks who resist NARP's appeal as just another good cause among many will decide NARP is their cause when shown GT.

FRANCIS T. SCANLAN

"Pancho" Scanlan, longtime Washington representative of the Mexican railways until his retirement in 1975, loved his February trip on Amtrak from Laredo to Washington. After getting home, he told his daughter that "everyone was so wonderful. . . they (the train staffs) are really trying" and he commented on the flowers in the diner. He couldn't believe that the President was seeking to kill the service, and that prospect greatly upset him.

On Feb. 26, at the age of 75, he died. Because of his experience on the trains and his concern for Amtrak's future, his daughter and son decided that the newspaper obituaries—which ran in both major Washington newspapers—would state that expressions of sympathy should be in the form of contributions to NARP.

We appreciated this gesture and will continue to do our utmost to see that these and all contributions to the Association save as much service as possible.



WHY AMERICA NEEDS AMTRAK

Americans are getting priced out of the automobile and airplane—and those who can afford to buy cars are buying smaller models uncomfortable on long trips. Air fares increased 30.8% from Feb. '80 to Feb. '81, faster than all other components in the transportation price index, although gasoline went up 6.6% just from Jan. to Feb. '81.

By and large, Americans will continue to reject buses for long trips, and the best hope for building bus ridership lies in continuing improvements in Amtrak/bus coordination.

Economic trends at Amtrak are positive, in contrast with the auto and air industries. Amtrak service is also vastly improved. As the Contra Costa (CA) Times editorialized Apr. 12, "Amtrak used to be a joke. . . Those days seem to be passing. . . Particularly in the west, with its new cars and new image, it is flourishing."



BIGGER HERTZ DISCOUNTS FOR NARP MEMBERS

Hertz has increased the discounts available to NARP members holding Discount Identification Stickers or Cards: 25% on published daily time and mileage rates (Gas excluded) in the U.S.; 15% in Florida, Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico (Gas excluded). Full details published in the July, 1980, News.

NEW THREATS TO AIR SAFETY

"The nation's airlines are in the throes of a ferocious campaign to save ever-more-expensive jet fuel. . . The two most controversial, as well as most profitable, changes are dispensing with life rafts and reducing cabin ventilation.

"According to the Federal Aviation Administration, 15 airlines have obtained permission to remove life rafts from coastal flights—planes that fly up to 162 miles from shore between cities. . .

"But several planes have gone down in coastal waters in recent years. In two cases—one off Los Angeles and one near San Francisco—life rafts were used to keep passengers afloat until rescuers reached them. In a third case, a National Airlines flight that had removed life rafts days earlier crashed into the sea near Pensacola, FL. Three persons died.

"They had the good taste to crash right next to a tugboat and barge that were lost in the fog," said Rich Clarke, health and safety officer of the Air Line Pilots Association. "Otherwise I think there may have been a lot more casualties." . . .

"Although airlines and jet manufacturers differ on the amount of fresh air passengers get, the average is probably between 6 and 10 cubic feet per minute, or less than a tenth of what pilots get, and no more than the minimum required for pilots. One airline has said it is attempting to reduce fresh air per passenger to five cubic feet per minute.

"At four cubic feet per minute, passengers and flight attendants could begin to experience the first symptoms of suffocation, according to Boeing and Lockheed spokesmen. . . ."

I Support President Reagan But . . .

Repeatedly, our members and other Amtrak train passengers preface their statements of outrage at administration plans to kill Amtrak with a general declaration of support for the President. One of the most articulate such defenses of full Amtrak funding came to us from Mr. and Mrs. Harry B. Welliver of Albany, OR, whose Mar. 16 letter to Senators Mark O. Hatfield and Bob Packwood read as follows:

"Gentlemen,

"At the outset, let me make it very clear that we are staunch supporters of President Reagan, we voted for him, and we support his philosophy of government without serious reservations. On the other hand, we are unalterably opposed to the philosophy of government as demonstrated by former Representative Al Ullman, and we voted against him. Furthermore, we will continue to work against Congressmen whose disregard for financial stability is opposed to that of the Reagan administration, and we will support private and organizational efforts to replace such Congressmen.

"In spite of having said all this, we do feel we must question the drastic cuts made in the Amtrak budget as proposed by the President. To view the Amtrak subsidy in raw dollars, without regard to the total national transportation picture is unrealistic and even shows prejudice, conscious or otherwise. For example:

"Recently published figures show that railroads spend 34¢ out of every income dollar for right-of-way maintenance. Trucks spend 5¢ and barge lines .003¢ for right-of-way maintenance. No figures were given for buses or airlines.

"Barge lines run from Portland to Lewiston, Idaho, on the Columbia and Snake Rivers, virtually free of any charges but using hundreds of millions of dollars of facilities paid from general tax revenue. This, then, is a subsidy just as sure as that received by Amtrak. It is an "in-kind" subsidy but a subsidy none the less. Right on the banks of both rivers the railroad has right of way on which it spends 34¢ of every dollar for maintenance. Two lines parallel the Columbia, and one extends to Lewiston. The government subsidizes the barge lines, seeks to deny equal treatment to the rail lines. Fair?

"Truck lines are equally treated by the government. The relatively small tax paid by the trucker entitles him to drive eight-thousand pound rigs, three trailers long in some cases, nationwide, on tens of thousands of miles of roads paid by general taxes. Without trucks, our highways could be built with considerably less money to accommodate only the three thousand pound passenger car. What the trucker receives is a handsome "in-kind" subsidy. In addition to the roadway, truckers receive free protection of the law (railroads provide their own), free annual maintenance, and free seasonal service where required.

"Started from almost less than nothing and fighting a devastating public attitude, Amtrak has been conspicuously successful! For example: the Northeast Corridor; Detroit-Chicago; San Diego-Los Angeles; Coast Starlight among others. To eliminate a single Amtrak train at this time would be to throw away what has been already wisely used to erect a viable alternative to cramped and sometimes primitive bus accommodations and to very expensive air travel. A balanced transportation system demands that rail passenger service be continued and expanded.

"To repeat: to view the Amtrak subsidy in raw dollars is wrong. It should be measured against the billions of dollars of "in-kind" subsidies paid to trucks, buses, barge lines, and airlines. I am confident that if this is done, Amtrak will merit increases rather than cuts. A balanced transportation policy is one that treats evenhandedly all modes of transportation and affords its users a choice of modes.

"This is not to be construed as requesting favoritism for Amtrak. Rather it is a request that in determining budget cuts, all modes of transportation be treated equally with full consideration given to "in-kind" subsidies. We believe this will result in increased support for Amtrak.

"It is respectfully requested that you give this matter serious consideration. We will be interested in following your decisions in this case."

"LET'S SEE SOME GOOD OLD INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVE
— EVERYBODY GET OUT AND DRIVE A CAR"



---copyright 1981 by Herb Block in The Washington Post

MAY BIRTHDAYS

The National Railroad Passenger Corporation, Amtrak, will celebrate its 10th birthday on May 3 with a Family Days equipment show at Washington Union Station (10 a.m.-6 p.m.). Created by the 1970 Rail Passenger Service Act, and known initially as Railpax, NRPC adopted the name Amtrak (America + Travel + Track) just days before opening for business on May 1, 1971.

NARP will observe its 14th birthday on May 18.

TRAVELERS' ADVISORY (cont. from p. 1)

trains has been postponed indefinitely due to the budget crisis.

With the 52-minute speedup of the LA-Seattle "Coast Starlight," prompt and reliable connections are again available at Martinez with "San Joaquin" service to and from Fresno/Bakersfield.

The Pittsfield, MA, station is returned downtown (Depot St.) from the obscure outlying location that Amtrak inherited.

The Washington-Cincinnati "Shenandoah" loses its sleeper, but travelers still have sleeper service on the "Cardinal," operating on a similar schedule between those cities but on a slightly faster route.

The Washington-Martinsburg "Blue Ridge" loses its food service, and—on five daily round-trips involving service in New York State, Chicago-Detroit-Toledo, and Chicago-St. Louis—"Club" service is replaced with "Custom Class"—the same seats but no food sold "at your seat."

The Washington section of the "Broadway Ltd." is combined with regular Corridor trains (#142 and #171) and the lounge car switched to the New York section.