



## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

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**John R. Martin, Pres.; Eugene Skoropowski, Vice Pres.; Robert Glover, Sec.; Joseph Horning Jr., Treas.; Ross Capon, Exec. Dir.; Barry Williams, Asst. Dir.; Jane Colgrove, Membership Dir.; Harriet Parcels, Transp. Assoc.**

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RETURN REQUESTED

# Russell Baker Says It All!

## Noted Humorist Ridicules U.S. Fly/Drive Mania

Rarely has the case for alternatives to endless road and airport construction been put as clearly—or as enjoyably—as in New York Times Columnist Russell Baker's May 11 essay, reprinted below. Supporters and critics of magnetic levitation transport are glad to credit Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-NY) for his leading role in telling the nation that more pavement is not the answer to gridlock—and, apparently, for inspiring Baker's column.

### One of Our States Is Missing

Senator Moynihan, whose public duties include trying to save the country from coming to a complete standstill, says that by the year 2020 Interstate 95 will have to be 44 lanes wide to carry the traffic between Fort Lauderdale and Miami.

"Pretty soon there won't be anything left of Florida," he says.

It's hard to weep about that because there's almost nothing left of Florida already. Whatever that thing is that's spreading down there may be interesting, or fun, or beloved by those sitting in its air-conditioned condos and traffic jams, but Florida it isn't.

Florida was still mostly there in the 1940's, and there was even a good bit of it remaining in the 1960's, but now there's hardly enough Florida left to fill a glass display case in the Smithsonian.

Robert Frost once said it doesn't take man long to use up a continent. The consumption of Florida shows he can do it practically overnight if the territory is humid and sandy and its winters are milder than Cleveland's.

Senator Moynihan's ruminations about the dubious future down there are evoked by his interest in developing new forms of transportation. A member of the Senate Public Works Committee, he is trying to stir up interest in experimental magnetic-levitation vehicles.

This is hard going because the Government is committed to sticking with cars and airplanes to the bitter end. Forty-four lanes of traffic on I-95. Meantime, why spend money experimenting in Buck Rogers stuff like magnetic-levitation vehi-

(continued on page 3)

### NARP HONORS SEN. LAUTENBERG



—Photo by Jim Ciacciarelli

At NARP's annual Washington reception Apr. 21, NARP Pres. John R. Martin, right, gives NARP's George Falcon Golden Spike Award to Chairman Frank R. Lautenberg (D-NJ) of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation "for his steadfast commitment to rail passenger transportation—intercity, commuter, and transit—and for his dedication to rail safety." In accepting the award, Lautenberg said: "You do yourselves and the country a great favor when you pursue a balanced transportation system. It borders on the ridiculous to think we can continue to pave over the nation to solve our transportation problems; we have to continue to pursue the rail option . . . . If Amtrak stopped running in the Northeast Corridor, we'd have to double the number of flights between New York and Washington. There isn't room in the sky; there isn't room on the ground for that . . . . I am going to continue to work on the rail option—to make sure not only that it is available but that it is reliable, safe transportation . . . . I look forward to meeting you again when we have high-quality, fast passenger train service all across the nation."

## Claytor Plans To Stay 'Several Years'

"Many reports are being circulated, apparently with merit, that President Claytor will soon retire from Amtrak and [Federal Railroad Administrator] John Riley is seeking that position."

This is from written testimony by United Transportation Union President Fred A. Hardin for a June 22 Senate Commerce subcommittee hearing.

In his appearance at the hearing, Claytor responded to "my good friend Fred Hardin . . . I've faced rumors about my impending resignation every year since I took this job. This is the first time such a rumor has appeared in prepared testimony, so I need to deal with it. I am not about to retire this year. I am not about to retire next year. I intend to be here for several years."

Claytor said he wants to see 3 major projects through to completion: Washington Union Station (which opens Sep. 29 but whose Amtrak portion—including transfer of most Amtrak headquarters personnel to offices in the building—won't be complete for another year), spring 1989 startup of Atlantic City service, and the 1990 opening of the West Side Connection bringing Empire Service trains into New York City's Pennsylvania Station—an opening which may slip to 1991.

"I haven't any intention of leaving until these projects are completed."

J. James Exon (D-NE), chairman of the Subcommittee on Surface Transportation: "I for one am delighted that you are planning—"

Claytor: "I should say, I am not going to retire voluntarily. My board can get rid of me any time they like."

Exon: "That wouldn't be retirement, would it!"

The other 2 senators present, Bob Kasten Jr. (R-WI) and Larry Pressler (R-SD), also said they were glad Claytor was staying on. ■

### TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

New York-Chicago "Cardinal" gained slumbercoach economy sleeping car June 5.

San Diego-Los Angeles-Santa Barbara "San Diegans" gained public telephones June 16. Railfones are located in Custom Class, cafe cars. This is second Amtrak route to offer Railfones; Washington-New York-New Haven Metroliners have had them since June, 1986 (May, July '86 News).

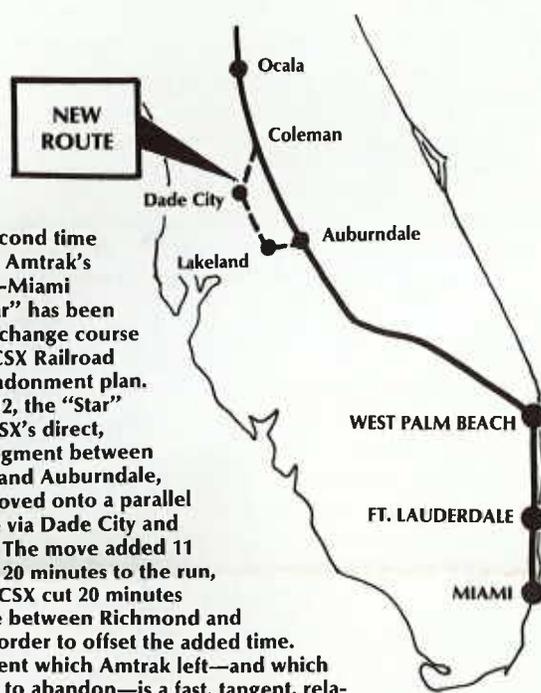
New Santa Barbara "San Diegan" handles checked baggage at Santa Barbara, Oxnard, Glendale, Los Angeles, and all points south except San Clemente, San Juan Capistrano.

Niles, MI, Amtrak station was rededicated June 18, following completion of nearly \$500,000 restoration project funded by Amtrak, State of Michigan. This striking 1892 Romanesque station is one of the nation's most photogenic.

Expansion of Lorton, VA; Sanford, FL, Auto Train stations was recently completed. \$485,000 project (combined) was funded by Amtrak (Sep. '86 News).

Greyhound returned to Harrisburg's multimodal Amtrak station June 15, 5 years after moving into new \$3 million Greyhound-only depot. State of Pennsylvania deserves thanks for urging the bus carrier back.

## 'SILVER STAR' MOVES . . . AGAIN



For the second time in 2 years, Amtrak's New York-Miami "Silver Star" has been forced to change course due to a CSX Railroad track abandonment plan. On June 12, the "Star" vacated CSX's direct, 54-mile segment between Coleman and Auburndale, FL, and moved onto a parallel CSX route via Dade City and Lakeland. The move added 11 miles and 20 minutes to the run, although CSX cut 20 minutes elsewhere between Richmond and Miami in order to offset the added time. The segment which Amtrak left—and which CSX plans to abandon—is a fast, tangent, relatively new railroad, built by Seaboard Air Line in the 1920s to provide booming southern Florida with an alternative to Henry Flagler's Florida East Coast Railway. Amtrak's new routing is over an older, slower SAL line, but one which has greater on-line population. In 1986, the "Star" was rerouted so that CSX could abandon part of its Richmond-Raleigh mainline (Sep. '86 News). CSX, the nation's second-largest railroad, is in the process of dramatically reducing its size, from 27,500 miles to about 15,000.

—Barry Williams/NARP Graphics

### DEFICIT COMMISSION SEEKS COMMENTS

The National Economic Commission, chaired by Republican Drew Lewis and Democrat Robert Strauss, was established by law Dec. 22, 1987, to make recommendations to the president and Congress on how to reduce the federal budget deficit while promoting economic growth and encouraging saving and capital formation.

Other commission members: Sens. Pete Domenici (R-NM) and Daniel Moynihan (D-NY), Reps. Bill Frenzel (R-MN) and William Gray III (D-PA), Lee Iacocca, Lane Kirkland, Dean Kleckner, Felix Rohatyn (author of the Dec. 28 *New York Times* op-ed column, "Enact a Gasoline Tax, to Begin With"), Donald Rumsfeld, and Caspar Weinberger.

The commission seeks public comments; send 2 copies of yours by Aug. 3 to the N.E.C., 734 Jackson Pl., NW, Washington, DC 20503. Do not exceed 10 double-spaced typed pages (including exhibits). Include, on separate sheet, a 1-page summary with your name, full address, and telephone number. (Further info: Alexander Platt, above address or 202/789-1993.) NARP will be urging the commission to support a gasoline-tax increase—and to devote a portion of the increase to mass transit and Amtrak.

In a June 17 news release, Chairman Glenn Anderson (D-CA) of the House Public Works and Transportation Committee "called for public opposition to proposals to use a gasoline tax hike for deficit reduction." (NARP's gasoline tax views are in *News*, June—p. 4—and Dec. '87.)

## D&H, CM&W BANKRUPTCIES

No sooner had we finished our "comprehensive" May story about Amtrak's track problems than Guilford Transportation Industries Inc.—after losing two costly arbitration decisions—petitioned on June 20 to place its Delaware & Hudson Railway into Chapter 11 bankruptcy reorganization. On June 22, under a temporary ICC order, the New York, Susquehanna & Western began operating D&H with support from CSX. Amtrak's New York-Montreal "Adirondack" uses mostly D&H tracks north of Schenectady, so you might check with Amtrak before riding.

Our report last month should have noted that, on Apr. 1, the 11-month-old Chicago, Missouri & Western (July '87 News) filed its Chapter 11 petition. To help convince the bankruptcy judge to allow CM&W to continue operations, Illinois Gov. James R. Thompson (R) on June 28 announced a \$4 million package of state assistance.

## RUSSELL BAKER (continued from page 1)

cles? Star Wars, yes; traffic solutions, no.

The American traffic solution is to widen the road. This is happening all over the once beautiful farmland of the Middle Atlantic states. Dirt roads barely wide enough for two cars to pass nervously are being paved with two broad lanes. Two-lane roads are swelling to four lanes with median strips, and four-lane divided highways are being widened to eight lanes.

The result is always the same. Better roads lure more people to settle alongside them, bringing more cars, which jam the better roads. This angers the people in the traffic jams, who elect new politicians promising to solve the traffic problem by building better roads.

This cycle of destruction has been continual since World War II. You'd think somebody would have realized by now that building better roads doesn't work. Just uses up the continent that much faster.

But everybody, of course, does realize that it doesn't work. We keep on doing it anyhow. For one thing, building highways is something we do well; everybody likes doing what he's good at, even though it leads to a terrible mess.

So we tacitly consent to being duped. We know the better roads being promised will relieve the traffic jam only briefly before doubling its intensity, but we elect the better-roads ticket anyhow.

For a couple of years the traffic gets even worse because of the construction work. Finally comes the year when traffic flows contentedly. But what is this!

You have just discovered yourself surrounded by vast, raw clots of housing developments named Greenery Glen, Forested Fantasy and Wistful Woods. Day after that the new jam-free, eight-lane highway is jammed halfway to Metropolis Bypass. Furious, aren't you? Time to vote for the new better-roads ticket.

So we head inexorably toward the 44-lane highway, cheered on by the incantation of real-estate developers and asphalt tycoons: no use crying, folks, because growth and development cannot be stopped, and anyhow it's good for you.

Why can't growth and development be stopped? In my experience, growth and development raise your taxes, make a shameful mess on the countryside and disperse people from the civilizing influence of city living to barren new communities which bind their victims to lifetimes of driving and offer so few rewards that the breakdown of the TV set becomes a

catastrophe.

Anything this dreadful can surely be stopped if somebody puts a mind to it. And somebody certainly should before the rest of the country is as disappeared as Florida.

It would be good if Candidates Bush and Dukakis tried to create some pressure to save a little of the country from burial under the 44-lane highway. A proposal or two for saving a little bit of America for another day would certainly be more invigorating than the tired old campaign gas they have been emitting so far.

Senator Moynihan, with magnetic levitation, is at least trying. Dukakis and Bush should study his lead. They both need levitating.

(See Oct. '86 and Dec. '87 News on Gov. Dukakis' support of high speed rail as an alternative to airport congestion.) ■

## Bullet Trains Can Unclog Air and Land Traffic

To the Editor:

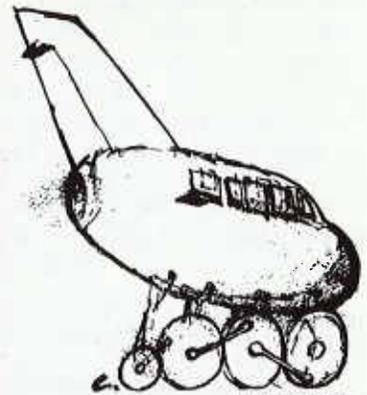
Russell Baker's column of May '11 ("One of Our States Is Missing") points out one of the transportation nightmares of the 1990's: ever-expanding highways feeding into overcrowded city streets. The other notorious problem is jammed airways at a steadily growing number of hub airports. There's no relief in sight for either situation.

Maybe the error is in tackling these problems separately. Consider a high-speed train system joining each hub airport with its closer "feeder" airports, up to about 150 miles or so. (The trains might be routed on the medians of interstate highways, at great savings in right-of-way cost.) An enormous amount of feeder traffic into and out of the hub airports would be transferred to the trains. This would free a large number of landing and takeoff slots for long-range flights, relieving air congestion at the hub.

If one of the bullet-train routes stopped at the hub city's downtown (except for express runs), the system would also be excellent for business and pleasure commuting between any two cities on the route. It would relieve the streets and interstates of considerable traffic while providing a fast, comfortable ride which could be used to read, do some book work or just watch the scenery pass at 150-

plus miles per hour. Magnetic levitation is unnecessary — Europe's new generation of trains will go 180.

Airports are a logical place for the terminals, not only because of the tie-



Horacio Fidel Cardo

in to air traffic but also because of good access and parking. Road congestion around the hub airport would be relieved by the train link between the airport and downtown.

The combination of airline feeder traffic and commuter traffic would generate the intensity of use needed to justify the capital investment.

WILLIAM L. SCHLOSSER  
Indianapolis, May 12, 1988

—Russell Baker column, Schlosser letter, and Horacio Fidel Cardo illustration all copyright © 1988 by The New York Times Co. Reprinted by permission.

## Magnetic Levitation Legislation

Noting that "no major transportation system has ever progressed in the U.S. without substantial Federal involvement," Sen. Daniel P. Moynihan (D-NY) on Oct. 16 introduced S. 1794 to establish within U.S. DOT a "High-Speed Ground Transportation Office," and "to develop the technology for a magnetically levitated superconducting transportation system." The bill would authorize \$300 million—\$100 mill. to National Aeronautics and Space Admin. for "Phase I" and \$200 mill. to the new DOT office. When introducing the bill, Moynihan said existing transport modes "have reached their limits" and "the railroad has changed very little in over a century." He sees mag lev permitting, for example, 1-hour New York-Washington and Boston-New York trips.

In Washington Nov. 12, Andrew James Samet, a Moynihan staffer, told the High Speed Rail Assn. the mag lev "concept is

entirely that of the Senator . . . . He recognizes that superconductivity advances have major implications for magnetic levitation . . . . It's now an engineering problem." Samet said excitement over a Boston-New York turbotrain achieving 110 mph in October (Dec. '87 News) was ironic, since the steam-powered "Empire State Express" hit 112 mph in 1893. He also said "conventional rail technology has not shown it is able to travel at air-competitive speeds."

NARP's Ross Capon responded that, while France's TGV may be near the "limits" of the steel wheel and rails, nothing in the U.S. approaches it; Amtrak captured 1/3 of the New York-Washington air-rail market with 3-hour running times and a Boston-New York running time of 2½ hours would require averaging only 90 mph. The problem is too many curves and the cost and impact of straightening them—not limitations of the rail technology.

In a Jan. 8 letter to Moynihan, Capon said "high speed rail and mag lev both require coordinated development patterns—not the sprawling, auto-dependent patterns so common today. To the extent that prompt development of high speed rail influences development, such rail projects could enhance prospects for mag lev in the future." Capon also thanked Moynihan for his consistent support of Amtrak and mass transit. (This year, Moynihan was the 2nd senator—after "Metroliner Father" Claiborne Pell, D-RI—to support the Lautenberg "save-Amtrak" resolution.)

Brenda Bohlke, Moynihan's science advisor, told a Transportation Research Board committee June 1 that the senator welcomes suggestions from interested observers about next steps, particularly as no action has yet been taken on his bill.

In addressing the NARP board in April, Paul Reistrup, the rail executive and consultant, said mag lev's "big drawback is that you can't interface with other trains; [you can't,] for instance, decide that you're going to run up to New York from Philly if you run from Pittsburgh mag lev; you can't go on the regular track. The TGV only runs today Paris-Lyons at 167 mph but it goes all over Europe—to Geneva and Nice—at regular speed. I think there is a real advantage to this flexibility of the steel wheel."

NARP agrees. But . . . one needs humility in predicting the future: a Japanese investment analyst studying prospects for Japan's reorganized railways visited the NARP office in June to learn about Amtrak and opined that magnetic levitation vehicles would completely replace airplanes and bullet trains on the Tokyo-Osaka run by 1996. ■

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#### BOOK DISCOUNT FOR NARP MEMBERS

A new book detailing the history of Washington Union Station—from the 1901 McMillan Plan, through the station's heyday, through post-war deterioration and the Visitor Center debacle, to the monument's upcoming reclamation—is being offered to NARP members at a special pre-publication discount through Aug. 15.

The book, which contains approximately 100 pages of new color and historic black & white prints, will be a valuable keepsake to those interested in railroads, architecture, and urban planning, says Chelsea Publishing, Inc. The book's author is Carol M. Highsmith.

Regular price will be \$19.95, but NARP members pay only \$16.95 (price includes shipping; District of Columbia residents please add 6% sales tax). Indicate you are a NARP member and make check payable to Chelsea Publishing, 1300 "G" Street, NW, Suite 3-D, Washington, DC 20005 (tel.: 202/347-0910). Books should arrive Sep. 1—just weeks before the station's reopening.

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#### RIDING THE NY SUBWAYS IS 'IN' FOR YUPPIES

"Trains were passing through the [New York City subway] station thick and fast . . . . The astonishing thing [Charles Marto] was witnessing [at noon] was an improvement in service, one of the many always-surprising changes for the better in the subway system. Mr. Marto had happened onto 'MidDay Business Service,' the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's effort to persuade New Yorkers of a certain age and median income to take trains instead of taxis between Wall Street and midtown Manhattan . . . . Promoters think it's the perfect way to get to a power lunch . . . . The feature attractions—new and overhauled cars, repaired track, and more frequent service on the Broadway-7th Ave. and the Lexington Ave. IRT lines—are part of a \$12 billion, 10-year program to rebuild a subway system that had seemed beyond salvation . . . .

"Mice scurry along the tracks next to station platforms, water—or some liquid—drips from stalactites onto your suit . . . . Panhandlers are everywhere . . . . 'It's not perfect, but it's a hell of a lot better than it was,' says David Gunn, the president of the New York City Transit Authority, the arm of the MTA that runs the subways . . . .

"The MTA says its advertising campaign is working. Ridership between the hours of 10 AM and 3 PM on the 2 lines is up 8% since April. One convert, Mr. Marto of Fried Frank Harris Shriver & Jackson, says he is impressed with improved transit times . . . . Others have their own reasons for going underground. 'When you start meeting famous people on the subway, you start thinking this is a trend,' says Patrick McCarthy, the executive editor of *W*, the bi-weekly fashion magazine. Soon after Mr. McCarthy saw society bandleader Peter Duchin on a train, *W* declared that riding the subways is 'in.'"

—Wall St. Journal, June 16 front-page story  
(Note: NY subway tokens are sold on board Amtrak's Express Metroliner, and they're selling well.)

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#### BALTIMORE TO BUILD LIGHT RAIL LINE

Baltimore will soon begin work on an ambitious 27-mile, \$290 million light rail trolley line between north-suburban Hunt Valley and south-suburban Glen Burnie/BWI Airport. The tracks and facilities will be built entirely with state and local funds; federal money will be sought for the cars. The Maryland Legislature has approved \$43 million for the project for the state's 1989 fiscal year (begins July 1). A strongly supportive Gov. William D. Schaefer (D) hopes to have the line completed in 1991.

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#### CLAYTOR WANTS TO EXPAND SERVICE

Amtrak Pres. Claytor told reporters he wants to expand or revive 12-15 routes, naming daily service on his 3 tri-weekly runs and new Cleveland-Cincinnati and Texas routes; the key is new equipment a penny gasoline tax increase would buy. He said Amtrak's improving performance may encourage Congress and the next President to expand Amtrak.

—Richmond Times-Dispatch, June 8

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**DUE TO A MAILING-SERVICE PROBLEM,** some NARP members did not get our April newsletter and an accompanying Apr. 13 letter from NARP Pres. John R. Martin with a NARP ad on the reverse side. If you didn't get one or both items, let us know and we'll send it (or them) to you promptly.

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