

NARP SUGGESTS REPLACEMENT OF R. LEWIS

(Following is the full text of a memo recently circulated to every member of the Congress).

Ridership on Amtrak trains, spurred in part by the energy crisis, is running far ahead of last year. Nevertheless, we are alarmed by the volume of complaints coming into our office from all parts of the country about deficiencies in Amtrak service. The substance of these complaints is confirmed by the experience of our own staff on frequent trips via Amtrak.

1. on-time performance is terrible, and this with schedules in many cases are slower than in 1941 or 1953. And things are getting worse:

	1971	1972	1973
All Trains	75%	75%	60%
Corridors	82%	82%	70%
Long Distance	56%	53%	30%

2. various equipment failures — heating, air conditioning, electrical, mechanical — are a routine occurrence almost every day on Amtrak trains. In recent months, equipment shortages have crippled Amtrak's efforts to meet the increased demand for its services.

3. despite considerable publicity by Amtrak regarding improvements, shortcomings persist in information, reservations, and on-board services.

4. serious gaps remain in the Amtrak route structure. Amtrak does not serve Cleveland, Dallas, Toledo, Des Moines, Tulsa, Akron or Little Rock. It has no service between Detroit and the east coast.

We believe that Amtrak top management must bear primary responsibility for its poor performance.

Amtrak has not taken over direct control with its own employees and supervisors the following essential functions:

- On-train ticket and revenue collection
- Train operating employees (in areas where these employees are engaged full-time in operation of Amtrak trains)
- Equipment rebuilding and repair
- Equipment maintenance and servicing

By failing to move in these areas Amtrak management is in continuing violation of the 1972 amendment to the Amtrak Act



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

Vol. 8, No. 2

March, 1974

which requires that "Insofar as practicable, the Corporation shall directly operate and control all aspects of its rail passenger service." Furthermore, Amtrak has yet to establish effective supervision of the performance of on-train service personnel which it has already taken over.

Amtrak cars are still equipped with obsolete steam heating (and in some instances steam air conditioning) systems, and with obsolete and non-standard electrical systems. Amtrak has not begun to correct these shortcomings in the course of its equipment repair program. Except for 57 "Metroliner" cars, and 2 French Turbo Trains, Amtrak has yet to order any new cars.

Amtrak has not established a reliable and timely information flow regarding the progress of its train movements, and hence does not have the capability of taking direct, prompt, and effective action to identify and eliminate underlying causes of train delay.

Since November 3, 1973, Amtrak passenger trains must by law be given priority over freight trains. Yet during November and December 1973, there were 2,398 instances of delay to Amtrak trains on account of freight train interference. To our knowledge, Amtrak has yet to appeal to the Attorney General for his assistance in enforcing the law. Hence Amtrak is apparent-

ly condoning law violations by the railroads which are downgrading Amtrak service.

Time and time again, Amtrak has acquiesced in the obstructionist conduct of the railroads, including controversies over initial route selection, proposed service expansion, operation of special trains, and operation of "dome" equipment.

Bad track is the major culprit behind Amtrak's slow schedules, rough rides, and undependable service. Up to now, all that Amtrak has done about the situation is to attempt to force the Penn Central and the Illinois Central Gulf to restore their tracks to the standard of maintenance they were in on the day Amtrak commenced operations (May 1, 1971). This approach does not seem realistic in view of the financial condition of the Penn Central and of the fact that maintenance levels on a number of railroads were already substandard by May 1, 1971.

If you agree with this assessment of Roger Lewis' management of Amtrak, please write immediately to your United States Senators urging that Mr. Lewis not be confirmed if he is in fact renominated by the President.

While Amtrak plans to spend \$100 million on track maintenance during the next two years, we are told that this money will be devoted entirely to the Northeast Corridor. Amtrak has not worked for enactment by Congress of a major program of track and roadbed improvements for the benefit of both freight and passenger service.

Amtrak's record to date would seem to indicate that its chief executive officer, Roger Lewis, has neither the experience, nor the knowledge, nor the commitment to effectively fulfill this job. This conclusion, based primarily on the preceding recitation of Amtrak shortcomings and underlying causes thereof, is buttressed by the following:

- Before coming to Amtrak, Lewis had never been in the railroad business.
- Louis W. Menk, chairman of Burlington Northern and an Amtrak director, has repeatedly stated his conviction that long distance passenger trains serve no useful purpose and should go the way of the stage coach. At a Congressional hearing in 1971, Menk offered to resign from the Amtrak board if Lewis wished him to do so. Lewis insisted that Menk remain on the board.
- Amtrak director John J. Gilhooley is chief executive officer of a major bus company which contributes funds towards anti-Amtrak lobbying by the bus industry. Lewis has yet to challenge or question the appropriateness of Gilhooley's presence on the Amtrak board.

- Lewis has made no effort that we are aware of to encourage the appointment of a consumer representative to fill the 2-1/2 year vacancy on the Amtrak board. To the contrary, Amtrak went all the way to the Supreme Court of the United States to successfully block consumer groups from bringing court actions to enforce the Amtrak statute.

(continued on page 2)

TRAINS FOR CLEVELAND?

Unconfirmed rumors are circulating in Washington that Amtrak's 1974 "experimental" route will be a restoration of the old "water level route" of the TWENTIETH CENTURY LIMITED, from New York through Cleveland to Chicago. The train would also serve Toledo, Buffalo and Albany. Under the Amtrak Act, a new "experimental" route is to be established each year. After a two-year trial, an "experimental" route would then be either terminated or made part of the permanent Amtrak system.

New Popularity Causes Amtrak to Buy "Everything on Wheels"

Amtrak hit by soaring business due to the energy crisis, has begun a frantic effort to buy up virtually every serviceable passenger car on the continent.

The latest Amtrak purchases are largely from among cars the company's buyers rejected as inadequate two years ago. The company also appears to be paying more for these rejects than it has been paying for some cars of better quality.

The Amtrak board has authorized the expenditure of \$1,131,000 for 100 cars — an average of \$11,300 apiece. Most are to come from the bankrupt Penn Central Transportation Co.

An Amtrak official said the company's car inspectors had examined about 500 cars offered for sale by seven railroads in the United States and Canada. They recommended purchase of at least 100.

The largest number of old cars offered — 224 — came from Penn Central. The financially shaky Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific offered 64, while Canadian Pacific offered 11.

Roger Lewis, Amtrak president, said in an interview recently, "I think we've got everything that's got wheels on it now."

Amtrak currently has a Philadelphia engineering firm completing specifications on an entirely new series of long-distance passenger cars. If Amtrak orders them (it is expected to order between 100 and 200) they would be the first such cars built in the United States since 1966. Most of Amtrak's present fleet — built during the 1950s — was obtained from the railroads when they went out of the passenger business in 1971.

GOOD WORD FOR AMTRAK

Dear Sirs:

I just want to offer a word of commendation to the Amtrak workers at Union Station in Chicago. Their patience and understanding in dealing with the many tired, hungry, and angry passengers coming off the eleven-hour-late S.F.-Denver Zephyr on New Year's Eve was greatly appreciated. They went out of their way to offer us good hotel accommodations in Chicago and alternate means of transportation to our destinations — an even an impromptu New Year's Eve party in the station. I heard several passengers hurling abuse at them and still they "kept their cool". I hope that most people realize that the dreadful delays and other problems faced by riders over this Holiday period were not the fault of Amtrak. I feel that they are doing the best they can with a difficult situation. The experiences of these past weeks prove how desperately we need a good rail system.

Sincerely yours,
Patricia C. O'Grady, New York, N.Y.

Haswell Urges Replacement of Lewis (cont'd, from page 1) . . .

• For the past three years, the Auto-Train Corporation has done an outstanding job transporting passengers with their own automobiles between Washington, D.C. and Florida. Auto-Train now proposes to establish a similar service between the midwest and Florida. Amtrak's response has been to undertake legal action to obstruct and/or delay Auto-Train's new service.

• Lewis now claims that the delay in dealing with Amtrak's equipment problems is traceable to inadequate funding during Amtrak's first year. Yet in May 1972, Lewis rejected an offer by members of the Senate Commerce Committee to provide additional funding for Amtrak over and above what had been requested by the Department of Transportation. Lewis asserted that the proposed funding was more than Amtrak could "sensibly" spend.

We believe that the first step in curing Amtrak's malaise is to replace Roger Lewis with a person who is committed to the goal of modern rail passenger service and has a background of solid achievement and experience in railroading.

—Anthony Haswell, Chairman of NARP

We are all going to have to change our lifestyles and be more thoughtful. One major area where enormous savings can be made not only in fuel, but in cleaning up our atmosphere, is in the switch from private automobile to mass transportation. A car averages 30 passenger miles per gallon, while a bus, on the other hand produces 110 passenger miles per gallon. A trolley, such as those which run on Pittsburgh's Drake line, can produce an even higher efficiency.

—Frank C. Herrerger
Urban Mass Transportation Administrator

Lewis Replies to MoPac Chief's Attack; Haswell Adds Views

Last month, NARP NEWS carried a letter from J. H. Lloyd, president of the Missouri Pacific Railroad, which made sharp accusations against Amtrak and claimed that MoPac is being unfairly blamed for Amtrak failures.

Following is a letter from Roger Lewis to U.S. Senator Thomas Eagleton, commenting on the Lloyd letter. In addition, observations of Anthony Haswell, chairman of NARP, are presented in a letter he directed to Mr. Lloyd.

Dear Senator Eagleton:

I have received your letter of January 18, which enclosed a copy of a letter Mr. J. H. Lloyd, President of the Missouri Pacific Railroad, sent to me and to the Chairman of the Interstate Commerce Commission. The letter concerned the delay of an Amtrak train, the National Limited, on the Missouri Pacific on January 1, and the causes for the delay, which received national publicity.

We are in the process of working out our differences with Mr. Lloyd on the handling of this and other passenger trains operated on Amtrak's behalf by the Missouri Pacific. I feel this will best be achieved by a cooperative, not an adversary approach. Mr. Lloyd and the Missouri Pacific have certainly had their problems with unreliable equipment and the handling of Amtrak trains by other connecting lines. Amtrak, however, doesn't take all the credit when a railroad runs one of our trains on time, and can't take all of the blame when trains run late.

We believe we have the problem of where to refuel straightened out to the joint satisfaction of the Missouri Pacific and Amtrak. New engines are on the way, which should greatly relieve the stresses caused by over-age locomotives and their associated equipment, such as the steam generators for train heat. We have 110 new diesel-electric locomotives on order, with deliveries to begin in March. Also, we are completely rebuilding a number of the older units.

However, we must disagree with Mr. Lloyd's suggestion that all troubles the Missouri Pacific has experienced in the operation of the Amtrak trains stem from matters beyond the Missouri Pacific's control. We made our own investigation of the January 1 incident, which uncovered — as reported to be by Amtrak management personnel — a number of facts inconsistent with the reports Mr. Lloyd has apparently received from his own employees. These involve a discrepancy on the amount of fuel on board; reports that firemen assigned to these trains were not experienced with or trained in steam-generator operation, including start-up routines, reports of a lack of supervision or outright hostility at the supervisory level toward the operation of the Amtrak trains, and failure to fill fuel tanks at Jefferson City after Jefferson City was again made the refueling point at the request of the Missouri Pacific.

As I indicated, we are pursuing these and other problems, which are technical in nature, with the Missouri Pacific. I do not believe it is in the best interests of the public to enter into a

(continued on next page)

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.

- | | |
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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.)

Lewis Reply (cont'd, from page 2) . . .

debate as to who is to blame. What we need more than arguments are solutions, and I believe the important thing in Mr. Lloyd's letter is his statement that the Missouri Pacific is ready, willing and anxious to assist Amtrak in straightening these matters out and in providing the kind of passenger service the public wants. We completely concur and promise the same operation.

We are working toward the new contracts cited as needed by Mr. Lloyd. We believe these new contracts should have incentives for superior performance as the Congress has suggested, and perhaps penalties as well, but whatever we achieve will also be approved by the railroads, as it takes at least two to sign a contract. The point of these provisions will certainly not be to penalize a railroad for problems over which it exercises no control. The point will be to encourage better operation, with the passengers as the beneficiaries.

(signed) Roger Lewis, President of Amtrak

Dear Mr. Lloyd:

This refers to your letter of January 4 to Chairman Stafford of the ICC and Roger Lewis of Amtrak, copies of which were sent to Senators Eagleton, Symington, Fulbright, and McClellan. Enclosed is the latest issue of our newsletter, in which we reprinted your letter in full.

While in the past we have had serious differences with your company on passenger service matters, we support your position that Amtrak is responsible for equipment maintenance and servicing, and that Amtrak has failed to fulfill this responsibility.

We have a thick file of letters complaining of various service deficiencies on Amtrak trains. Equipment failures of one kind or

ANNUAL MEETING APRIL 23

The Annual Meeting of the National Association of Railroad Passengers will be held at 9 a.m. Tuesday, April 23, 1974, at the National Lawyers Club, 1815 H St., NW, Washington, D.C.

another account for a substantial portion of these complaints. I am on Amtrak trains an average of once every two weeks; equipment failures occur almost every trip. I am convinced that a majority of Amtrak shortcomings are caused neither by railroad financial penury nor by railroad hostility towards passenger service, but are the inevitable result of Amtrak's refusal to assume and perform basic operating functions.

Ever since Amtrak commenced operations in May 1971, we have felt strongly that Amtrak would never succeed unless and until it operated and maintained its own trains with its own employees and supervisors. Amtrak's basic relationship to the railroad companies should be that of a user of track and other fixed facilities. The sorry record of Amtrak operations in recent

months reinforces our convictions in this respect. Amtrak cannot pass along its fundamental responsibilities to others who have no stake in the proper performance thereof.

We have consistently argued that Amtrak passenger trains should be given priority over freight trains. A logical corollary to that proposition is that Amtrak trains should not cause delay to freight trains on account of equipment failures or other matters for which Amtrak is responsible. Accordingly, we suggest that it would be appropriate for Missouri Pacific and other railroads to refuse to permit operation over their lines of Amtrak equipment which has significant mechanical defects, and to collect a penalty payment from Amtrak each time an Amtrak train delays a freight train on account of failures in areas of Amtrak responsibility.

(signed) Anthony Haswell, Chairman of NARP

BRITISH RAIL TOUR PLANNED

Britain-by-Rail Tours, an undertaking of PASSENGER TRAIN JOURNAL, is offering a two-week rail tour of Great Britain May 30 through June 13. Persons interested should write to: Britain-by-Rail Tours, 29 East Broad St., Hopewell, NJ 08525.

Symposium on Energy Crisis In Transportation Set for May

A symposium on "The Effects of the Energy Shortage on Transportation Balance" will be held at The Pennsylvania State University on May 29-31, 1974, under the sponsorship of the Pennsylvania Transportation Center, the international journal *Transportation Research* and the U. S. Department of Transportation.

Topics to be covered include: (i) The probable effects of fuel shortage on various transport modes, (ii) Management of the immediate shortfall to minimize disruption in the transport sector, (iii) The relationship between existing modal split analysis and energy requirements, (iv) Economic, social and institutional constraints on energy optimization in transport, (v) International and interstate comparisons; special problems of particular communities, (vi) The effect on international transport systems, and thus on foreign trade, (vii) For freight transport, the economic effect on production and distribution of particular commodities, (viii) The influence of type of energy requirements of different modes, (ix) New technologies which may affect the economics of the problem, or which might influence the other constraints, (x) The long term result of the energy shortage; how to provide an energy input for long range planning.

Travel funds and other support will be available for invited speakers, and in part for commentators and other contributors. Persons interested in presenting a paper should communicate with Frank Haight, the organizer, giving the title, abstract if possible, length of the paper and date when the manuscript will be ready, together with an estimate of the amount of support which will be needed. In view of the tight schedule for program planning, advance notice by telephone or cablegram is suggested.

An ideal national system of transportation (considering both the environment and use of energy) would make primary use of the most energy efficient means of travel, trains and buses. An integrated system allowing for a long-haul railroad network connected to short-haul bus lines, and a shift away from the current reliance on airplanes and automobiles, would be of obvious benefit.

—Cara Lee A. Mahany

ATTENTION PITTSBURGH—A serious accident occurred in Montreal's subway Jan. 23: Exploding and burning rubber tires on a subway train in the morning rush hour set off black, acrid smoke that miraculously caused no fatalities but caused the hospitalization of several passengers as over 600 riders were led to safety thru a smoke-filled tunnel. On Dec. 9, 1971 another such fire destroyed 36 subway cars and killed a train operator, causing \$7.5 million damage and closing two stations for over a month. After the 1971 incident, experts made recommendations to Montreal for safety measures, but they had not yet been initiated.

Reprieve for Iron Horse' is Newest Book on Railroad Passenger Service

Claitor's Publication Division has announced March release of *Reprieve for the Iron Horse*. *Reprieve* deals with the decline of passenger train service under private management, the failure of governmental regulation in stemming the tide, possible bad faith on the part of rail management, and the series of events which led to the passage of the Rail Passenger Service Act of 1970.

The history of Amtrak is traced, from those bleak days in 1971 when inter-city passenger service was cut in half to the surprising resurgence of service in spite of efforts by interests in government and railroad management to hobble the fledgling corporation. The effect of the twin specters of environmental degradation and energy shortfall is traced, as is the legislative battle to wrest control of Amtrak from the White House to Capitol Hill.

An appendix contains relevant legislation, charts and maps showing the changes in rail travel since 1970, and several pages of photographs of the first years of Amtrak operations.

This book is available from Claitor's Publication Division, Box 239, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821 and is priced at \$12.50.

Joseph Vranich, former executive director of N.A.R.P. who has been an employee of Amtrak in Denver, Colorado, is returning to Washington to join the Amtrak public relations department next month.

FRIENDS OF THE RAILROAD PASSENGER

U.S. Senator Edward M. Kennedy

U.S. Senator Edward M. Kennedy is a constant champion of rail passenger service, and has cosponsored many legislative measures designed to help this mode.

In commenting on the Northeast rail legislation recently enacted, Senator Kennedy concentrated on its provisions for improvements of the Northeast Corridor Rail Passenger Service.

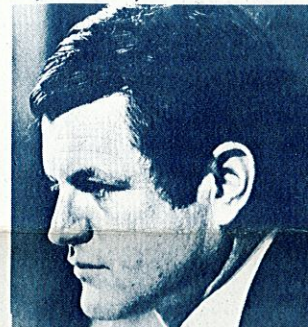
"Since 1971, we have delayed implementing the recommendations of, the Northeast Corridor study report submitted to the Congress by the Department of Transportation," he said. "That report demonstrated not only the financial and technological feasibility of high speed ground transportation along the Washington-Boston Corridor but the desirability for such action as well.

"The current energy crisis is only a further example of the reason why the full implementation of that project is required. We simply can no longer afford to waste energy as we have been doing in the past. The failure to fully develop railroad passenger service in the corridor has added to the current energy crisis as well as being a major factor in the deterioration of our transportation system.

"G. A. Lincoln, former chief of the U.S. Office of Emergency Preparedness has compared the fuel usage of modes of transportation. The cross-country passenger train is nearly three times more efficient than the automobile, and four times more efficient than the jet plane. The commuter rail system is nearly seven times more efficient than the auto.

"I believe we would be doing ourselves a major disservice if we did not utilize the opportunity presented by the need for revamping of the rail industry in the Northeast to produce not only improved freight service but improved passenger service as well," he added.

Senator Kennedy has also fought for the opening of the Highway Trust Fund for urban mass transit purposes.



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. 2

March, 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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