

# Amtrak President Asks For Specific Rail Upgrading

Under the new and vigorous leadership of President Paul H. Reistrup, Amtrak has finally spoken out in specific terms regarding its needs for track and for Washington Union Station (see separate story), opposing Administration policies on both issues.

Reistrup testified before the House Subcommittee on Transportation and Commerce July 9 in support of bills aimed at putting people — furloughed railway maintenance workers first — to work *this year*. The idea is to use public funds to enable Amtrak and the bankrupt railroads to make long overdue track improvements while helping to reduce unemployment.

Reistrup presented a list of 17 projects with a total pricetag of \$700 million. Among them: improvement of the entry of New Orleans-line trains into Chicago Union Station and of SP tracks to permit Dallas-Houston service; restoration of the 12 miles east of Albany needed for direct Boston-Albany service, the old NYC mainline through Schenectady, and trackage into Cincinnati Union Terminal, to which Amtrak plans to return.

Secretary Coleman offered some unconvincing generalizations in opposing the concept: precise lines to be included in the Final

System Plan not available; and the money won't become available until after the current work season is over, with funds available anyway next year under the Regional Rail Reorganization Act, the special law covering the Northeast bankrupts. (The Final System Plan is now available).

But the Subcommittee members know that there are thousands of miles of deteriorated track whose retention is a certainty, and included the provision that grant applications

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Amtrak's board of directors on July 30 approved use of Amtrak funds to improve MKT's Temple-Taylor line to shorten by 40 miles the Fort Worth-Austin segment of the "Inter-American" route.

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should be evaluated on the basis of their long-term significance.

While the Secretary probably was correct in anticipating slow action by Congress, he forgets that there is always a work season somewhere on the Amtrak system — and that much of the work proposed by Amtrak would not be covered either by the RRR Act or the Rail Revitalization Act (RRA), which contains only loans for which Amtrak would not be eligible, and which is likely to be tied up many months in debate over regulatory changes.

Amtrak is not eligible for the RRA loans, and no railroad will play Santa Claus by spending its money on, for example, consolidation of stations at San Antonio.

Amtrak has made major investments in virtually all aspects of its operations except track, and it would be blatant "pennywise-pound-foolishness" for the Administration to block funds for the track improvements needed to make all completed and approved investments worthwhile.

Failure by the House Committee to report a bill before Congress recessed for August prevented House action on the bill — thus, although the bill is still alive, hope for rail and roadbed construction starting this summer ended. Concern over a possible presidential veto, plus the need to concentrate efforts on the costly financing anticipated for ConRail later this year were believed to be major contributing factors to the stall.

Other segments on Reistrup's \$700 million list were: Chicago-Detroit, Pittsburgh-Chicago, Pittsburgh-St. Louis, Chicago-St. Louis, Boston-Albany, Cincinnati-Indianapolis, Seattle-Portland, Louisville-Chicago, White Sulphur Springs-Huntington, and San Diego-Los Angeles.

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## 'Coach' Reistrup Sends In New First String To Lead Amtrak

Amtrak President Paul H. Reistrup, making use of lateral transfers and resignations, has established his own team of top executives to help him run the nation's passenger train system.

Some changes were announced earlier; others were to take effect August 1. Reistrup moved slowly at first, assessing performance and needs and appraising the work of top officials he had inherited. However, in less than four months, he approved a reorganization and key personnel changes.

David A. Watts, Jr., formerly director of state and local affairs, was elevated to vice president-general manager, line operations. The line operations function was decentralized to set up four regions, the aim being to provide expedited decisions and actions to improve service.

Alfred A. Michaud, who was president of the Sterigard Corporation, is the new vice president for marketing, replacing Harold L. Graham. A new position, vice president-services program development, was filled by Graham. A function of the new job will be to integrate into the Amtrak fleet the hundreds of new cars of which delivery has begun.

Nathaniel H. Goodrich, a former general counsel of the Federal Aviation Administration, is the new vice president-general counsel, replacing Robert S. Medvecky who resigned to enter private law practice in Washington, D.C. Governmental affairs will be directed by Bruce O. Pike, (former NARP lobbyist) who had been Amtrak director of congressional affairs.

F.S. (Pat) King, who had been vice president operations, was named senior vice president for corporate operations. There were reports that, if Amtrak gets control of the Northeast corridor under the reorganization now in process, King would be placed in charge of its operations.

Also, Roger Lewis, chairman of the board since Amtrak was established, announced that he is retiring as chairman. He will continue to be a director.

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Donald P. Jacobs, dean of the graduate school of management of Northwestern University, on July 30 was elected chairman of the board of Amtrak, to succeed Roger Lewis, who retired. Mary J. Head of Newport News, Virginia was named vice-president. Both are "new" directors, having been appointed last year. Mrs. Head is one of the three consumer members of the board.

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**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
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The government (should) create paying, useful jobs like rebuilding the nation's railroad beds.

—Howard K. Smith, ABC-TV

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After NARP NEWS reported in April that voters of Wisconsin had approved a constitutional amendment making it possible for the state to spend public money on rail passenger services, a recount was demanded. The outcome was reversed, and the measure was found to have lost narrowly.

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Amtrak's 175-page Tour Manual on regional, domestic and international independent and escorted rail tours is now available. Write Amtrak, 955 L'Enfant Plaza North, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20024.

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## Commuter Services Threatened

Several commuter rail services on the East Coast and in the Chicago area which are not supported by state or local subsidies may be discontinued if such subsidies are not forthcoming.

At issue are the following runs which extend outside the transit districts of the major cities: Boston to Stoughton and Worcester, Mass., and Providence, R.I.; Chicago to Lake Geneva, Walworth, and Kenosha, Wisc., and Michigan City-South Bend and Valparaiso, Ind.; Cleveland-Youngstown; and Philadelphia to Bethlehem, and Reading-Pottsville, Pa., Bound Brook-Newark, N.J., and Wilmington-Newark, Del.

Chicago and North Western has just applied for ICC permission to discontinue the Lake Geneva runs, and public hearings will be held if the ICC receives enough protests.

ConRail is expected to follow the recommendation of the U.S. Railway Association's Final System Plan and seek regulatory approval to discontinue unsubsidized services which lose money. All of the above services, except the four Chicago lines other than Valparaiso, are operated by bankrupts whose properties will be reorganized under the Final System Plan.

Problems may also develop with services which ConRail regards as "partially subsidized" if an appropriate agency is unable or unwilling to sustain the increased payments ConRail might require.

In testimony before Senator Hartke's Subcommittee on Surface Transportation, NARP President Orren Beaty urged that ConRail be required "to continue the operation of these trains for a minimum of one year after conveyance regardless of actions the regulatory bodies may take," and "to operate the trains... for up to one additional year where there is a reasonable prospect that a local subsidy will begin... by the end of the year."

NARP believes that many of the people who would fight for local subsidies for these trains are not even aware that they are in jeopardy. The extra time is for such people to learn the facts and to lobby state and local officials, many of whom have never previously been involved in subsidizing trains.

Producing action in such climates takes time. In Eastern Massachusetts, where several communities outside the MBTA district have for ten years paid the MBTA for providing commuter service, the process of adjusting to a new state policy which increased the local share from ten to fifty per cent required a year of intense work by state and MBTA officials and active citizens including the local NARP affiliate, Citizens for Rail Transportation. In Andover, commuters risked \$6,000 of their own money after the town meeting turned down the rail subsidy; the next meeting reversed the decision, the service was saved, and the commuters repaid.

Securing subsidies where none have existed may be even more difficult, and NARP believes the one-to-two-year grace period to be entirely appropriate. NARP urges its members who live in the regions served by the above lines to drum up support among users and other concerned people, and to urge local and state officials to act to save the trains. Although the specific problems vary from one state and line to the next, and partial funding by Amtrak may be appropriate for the longer runs, the common element is the need for citizen action.

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The supporters of railways had been classed as cranks and sentimentalists, but there was no object for which people had a more sentimental regard than the private motor car.

—Railway Invigoration Society (England)

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Transit is and will continue to be one of the top priorities of this administration. . . The energy shortage is as important now as it was when service station lines were long. It is up to the leaders of the transit industry to make the public aware of the importance of their product.

—William Coleman, Secretary of Transportation

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Tony Haswell, founder of the National Association of Railroad Passengers and the voice of passenger service even before the organization came into being in 1967, has resigned as a member of the Board of Directors. He also has resigned as chairman of RAIL Foundation, with which NARP is affiliated. In June, Tony joined the Rock Island as managing director, passenger services, and believes he should devote full time and attention to the new responsibilities. He will remain a member of both NARP and RAIL. Good luck in the new job, Tony!

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## NARP Explains Financial Status; (Why May Newsletter Was Skipped)

NARP's many loyal members have a right to know the association's financial condition and why we did not have a May newsletter.

Membership has been holding steady — perhaps gaining a little. Dues, raised last year to a minimum of \$10 a year, are producing more revenue, although some members dropped out with the increase from the \$5 minimum.

But with rising costs of operating a Washington office; observing and reporting on activities of the Congress, the Department of Transportation, U.S. Railway Association and Amtrak; testifying, lobbying, and putting out the newsletter 11 times a year, income is not keeping up with the costs.

We have undertaken a number of efforts to increase membership. Perhaps some of these will bear fruit. We have trimmed expenses as much as possible without reducing staff, quality of the newsletter, or scope of the work with Congress. We believe that an increase in membership to 9,000 or 10,000 would bring in enough revenue to do a first-class job.

Even with the funds shortage (which made it necessary for us to skip a newsletter in May), NARP has testified before more congressional and Interstate Commerce Commission hearings this year than ever before. It is a big year in transportation, and much work is required.

When the NARP Board of Directors meets in October, it may be called upon to consider steps to reduce our staff and the quality of the newsletter (using lighter paper and a simple confidential Washington newsletter type format, for example) relying heavily on volunteers in the Washington-Maryland-Virginia area to monitor hearings, aid in preparation of testimony, write newsletter items, etc. Or, it may be forced to consider raising dues.

We would like to have the views of members on all these possibilities. Much work needs to be done to protect the gains made so far in railroad passenger service and to assure improvements, but it costs money. What do you think?

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## MBTA WILL ACQUIRE B & M TRACK

Boston and Maine Railroad commuters can look forward to faster and more comfortable service as the result of an agreement reached by the railroad with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority.

MBTA will acquire most B&M tracks east of Fitchburg and south of the New Hampshire state line, 230 route miles, as well as the 84 self-propelled Budd diesel passenger cars. The deal must be approved by the judge overseeing the bankrupt railroad's reorganization, and by the Urban Mass Transportation Administration, which would provide MBTA with the necessary funds under its Advance Land Acquisition Program.

MBTA Director of Commuter Rail David Gunn has also put together a "do-it-yourself public works for rails" program, encouraging on-line suburbs to assign employees hired under the federal Comprehensive Education and Training Act program to painting and repairing stations and cleaning and grubbing the rights-of-way.



With the new Austrailpass, U.S. visitors can travel first class for 14 days thruout Australia's 27,000-mile railroad network for \$94. The pass, available from two weeks to three months, provides for first class transportation, but economy class seats are provided where first class is not available. Costs are: 14 days \$94, 21 days \$147, one month \$188, two months, \$268, and three months \$295. (Does not include charges for sleeping berths or meals).

## Amtrak Downward Ridership Trend Reversed By Vacation Travel

Vacation travel seems to have reversed a downward trend apparent all year in Amtrak ridership.

June totals were not available at press time, Amtrak reported, and actual ridership may be down from June 1974, but the decline (smaller than in previous months this year) will show a leveling off. A spokesman said revenues for June 1975 will be close to those for June 1974.

Total ridership declined during the first five months of the year by 16 percent, with major route declines being standard. The Detroit-Chicago service using Turboliners, increased by 64 percent in May over May 1974; Washington-Cumberland had a 7 percent gain, and the Springfield-New Haven train had a 23 percent gain. Otherwise, everything was down.

## FARES AND SERVICE

**INTERCITY:** Discontinuance of Southern's tri-weekly "domeliner" between Salisbury and Asheville was approved by the North Carolina Utilities Commission. Unless exceptions were filed by July 30 by participants in the case, the last trips will be August 8. However, Southern will run excursion trains on the scenic, 29-mile Asheville-Old Fort segment on weekends through Labor Day and on some fall weekends for foliage viewing. Wilksburg, Pa., will disappear from Amtrak timetables after the stop of the "National Limited" there is discontinued with the September 14 timetable change. Amtrak's new Metroliner-style coaches ("Amcoaches"), which have been on public display during July in cities from Boston to Washington, are expected to go into revenue service in mid-August.

**COMMUTER:** New Jersey commuter rail services are threatened by a budget crisis. At press time, present services were assured through August 4, but it was anticipated that the state legislature would make cuts in the requested budget which would require fare increases and service reductions.

Railroad management recommendations for 25% fare hikes will be the subject of public hearings by New York's Metropolitan Transit Authority at the Biltmore Hotel at 10 AM; August 21 for the Harlem, Hudson, and New Haven Lines (the State of Connecticut will also have to approve increases on the New Haven); August 22 for the Long Island Rail Road. The MTA Board has approved instituting off-peak one-way fares for a three-month experimental period at 75% of the normal fare on all commuter lines.

The Board has also approved hikes in bridge and tunnel tolls expected to yield \$52 million in new annual revenues, to be divided equally between the City subway and bus system and MTA commuter rail operations to subsidize their operating expenses; and urged development of a broad-based state-wide tax to generate additional funds for public transportation in the state.

NARP Assistant Director Ross Capon testified in June before the Prince William County (Va.) Board of Supervisors in support of the Board's application for capital funds from the Urban Mass Transportation Administration to start one daily round-trip commuter train on the Southern between Washington and Manassas and the RF&P Washington-Quantico.

## Track Conditions Number One Problem, NARP Members Say

In the March newsletter, we asked members to select from a list of 20 items the five most important ones for NARP to be working on. Here are the results. Thank you for responding!

Our thanks to Richard A. Gray III and Bill Jenkins, NARP members and Deerfield (MA) Academy students, for their help in tabulating the results.

Track conditions . . . . .	656
New cars . . . . .	429
*Remove "for-profit" clause . . . . .	299
Expand route structure . . . . .	275
More budget sleepers . . . . .	243
Improve fare structure . . . . .	196
Improve service levels . . . . .	163
Northeast Corridor project . . . . .	132
Corridor parlor cars . . . . .	131
Fighting intercity train-offs . . . . .	127
Auto-train-type services . . . . .	125
On-train services policies . . . . .	102
Improving promotion of trains . . . . .	93
Promoting commuter rail as	
urban transit solution . . . . .	84
Handicapped/elderly . . . . .	70
Fighting commuter train-offs . . . . .	63
Coach reservation policies . . . . .	32
Changing other Federal laws . . . . .	29
*Reduce Amtrak deficit quickly . . . . .	25
Baggage checking policies . . . . .	11

\*These two items were presented as alternatives.

## NARP Slide Show Available

The need for better rail service — and the need for NARP — is illustrated in a series of slides, with accompanying text, which is available for brief loans to members.

NARP's slide show includes the best and the worst of U.S. passenger service, contrasted with the superior "bests" of Japan, Europe and even some developing nations.

It was prepared for fundraising purposes. Please request it only if you can assemble a group of viewers, including some likely to make substantial contributions to NARP. If you like, we will be pleased to help coordinate your scheduling so that a NARP staff member or director could be present.

The Federal Government should take over and maintain all railroad trackage in the country.

—Providence, R.I., Bulletin

### 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.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing \$10  | <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsoring \$50     |
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|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Life, \$500 or more |

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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.)



# Amtrak Head Says Union Station Should Be Retained

"Somehow the Visitors Center cart has gotten before what used to be called the iron horse," wrote Amtrak President Paul Reistrup to Chairman Vance Hartke (D-Ind.) of the Senate Subcommittee on Surface Transportation. "It now appears...desirable to save (Washington) Union Terminal for use as a railroad station, a purpose for which it was admirably designed."

The letter reported Reistrup's view that current plans which call for conversion of the Terminal into a "National Visitors Center" under the National Park Service of the Department of Interior, and construction of a small new station north of the old building, "will be completely inadequate" for rail passenger needs. Even the Federal Railroad Administration, in testimony July 10 before the Hartke subcommittee, acknowledged that the new station would only serve "for the next few years" and "is not likely...to meet projected long-range" needs.

Why are we building a new station whose capacity even to handle existing peaks is doubted by some Amtrak staff? Because rail passenger traffic is much heavier today than in the late sixties, when Congress decided to save the monumental station by converting it into the Visitors Center.

What next? Official plans call for construction a few years hence of an intermodal terminal (also serving intercity buses) somewhere behind the Visitors Center/new station. But the possibility that this or a future Administration would be reluctant to fund such a facility leaves a real danger that we could be stuck with the new but "completely inadequate" station for many years to come.

Reistrup noted the likelihood that the planned grand scale Visitors Center may not be ready by July 4, 1976, and suggested that "a more temporary center could be mounted more quickly to handle the Bicentennial crowds", removed later, "and replaced by more modest permanent facilities, perhaps with an orientation center in what is now the Presidential (East) Wing."

Preservation of the existing station as a station would assure adequate space for long-run passenger volumes. Properly integrated with parking and bus facilities constructed behind it, the concourse could become even more useful, achieving the intermodal goal at a lower overall cost.

Amtrak and the other agencies are continuing discussions with the hope of reaching a satisfactory settlement.

NARP agrees with Reistrup and strongly urges the Administration to direct that Washington Union Station be preserved for use as a railroad station.

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The Connecticut Association of Rail and Bus Users (CARABU) was formed at a June meeting in Meriden. It brings together citizens active in seeking commuter rail service improvements as well as those promoting improved Amtrak service on both the Shore Line and Inland Route. Stuart Low, of Darien, is acting chairman; James Ullman, of Meriden, the acting secretary. Both are NARP members, and — along with NARP Assistant Director Ross Capon — spoke at the initial meeting on behalf of NARP efforts to increase membership.

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## USRA Restructuring of Freight

### May Cause 'National' Rerouting

Rerouting of the "National Limited" and the loss of a segment of the U.S. Railway Association's proposed 80 mph network of passenger corridors will result from USRA restructuring of through freight traffic.

The Indianapolis-Richmond-Dayton segment will be downgraded, and maybe partially abandoned, and the "National" will run via Cincinnati.

If the Federal Railroad Administration does not shut down Indiana portions of the present "National" route because of unsafe track, the present route will remain in use until next May. By then, the Cincinnati-Indianapolis line should be ready to handle the "National" and the new Washington-Denver train. If FRA does act, the "National", on an interim basis, would use a freight route via Union City, bypassing both Dayton and Cincinnati.

On the bright side, Cincinnati will soon be linked to Dayton, Columbus, and New York by a basic system train. But lost will be the Pennsy's old "racetrack" east from Indianapolis. A 1957 schedule allowed one hour fifty minutes between Indianapolis and Dayton; the best to be expected via Cincinnati is about three hours and ten minutes.

Amtrak says the new plan lays the groundwork for several fast-train corridors; opens-up new markets; provides operating efficiencies, and improves cost-effectiveness.

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