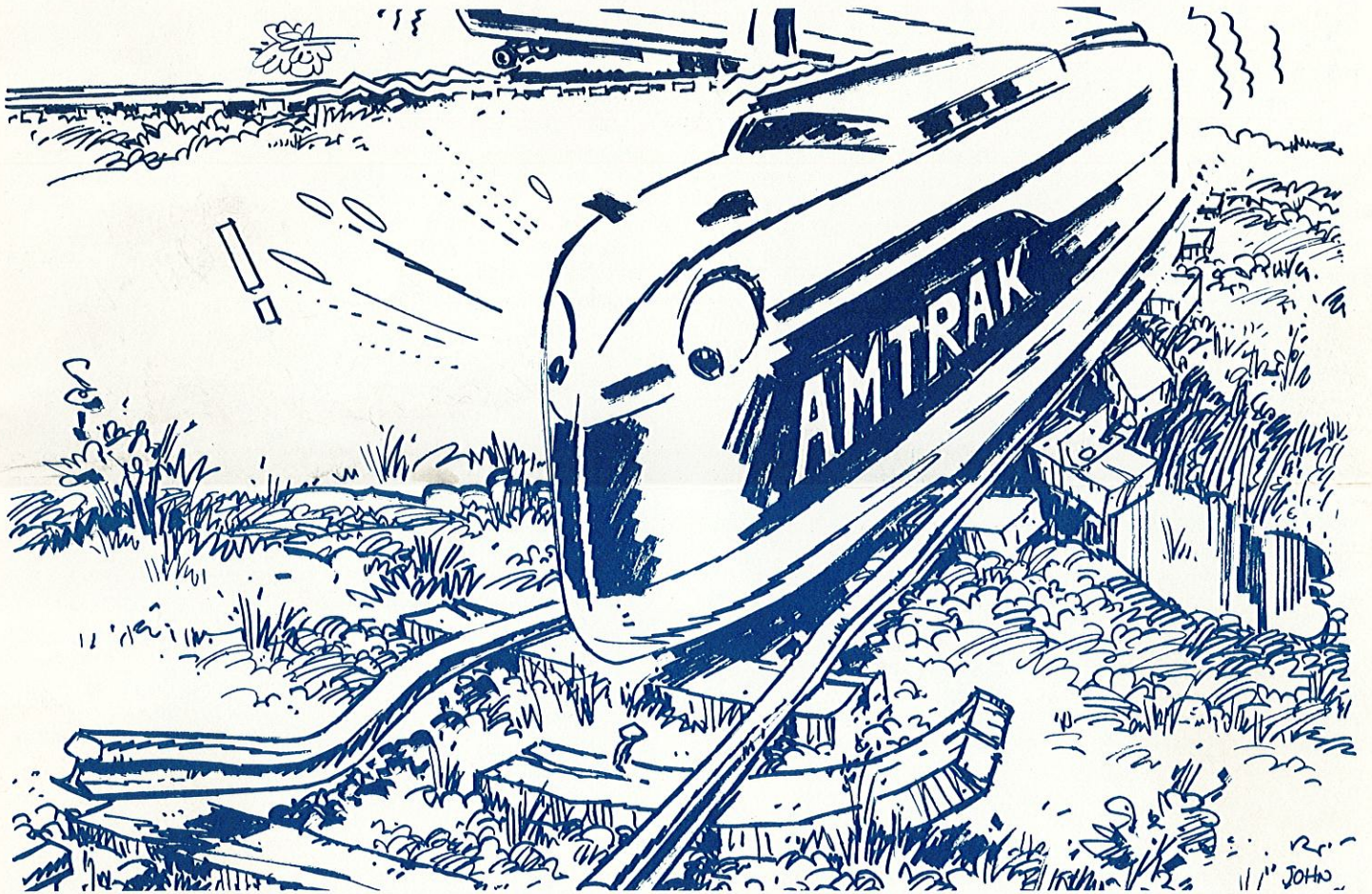


NARP Seeks Track, Roadbed Improvement



Amtrak Patronage Depends on Speed, Comfort, Dependability of Service

A campaign to seek "vast improvements" in railroad track and roadbed was announced at the annual meeting of the National Association of Railroad Passengers in Washington April 24.

Anthony Haswell, chairman of NARP, said "If rail passenger service is to be operated at speed, comfort and dependability levels which will attract patronage in competition with other modes, well-maintained track and roadbed is absolutely essential."

Mr. Haswell outlined the association's actions in support of track and roadbed improvements and upgrading of Amtrak service.

"The Department of Transportation report on Amtrak was, in general, very good," Mr. Haswell stated, "but without improving track and roadbed, much of the money spent on Amtrak is actually wasted."

"At the present time, as a consequence of track and roadbed deterioration, ride quality of passenger trains on several Amtrak routes has declined to the point where almost the only people who will ride trains are pass holders, railroad enthusiasts, and those with an absolute mental or physical aversion toward air travel," Mr. Haswell stated.

"Track and roadbed improvement is imperative if such service is not to be discontinued.

"Outside the Northeast Corridor, the Penn Central allows a maximum top speed of 70 miles an hour. On the important line between Chicago, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, and Louisville, there are many stretches with 'slow orders' limiting train speeds to 30 miles an hour or less. The main line of the Illinois Central Gulf

between Chicago and New Orleans is limited to 70 and also is picketed with much more restrictive slow orders. The main line of the Burlington Northern between Chicago and Denver is becoming increasingly rough-riding and derailment-prone.

"The government must require all railroads to maintain their main lines to standards sufficient for smooth, dependable operation of freight trains at 60 miles an hour, and should provide for financial assistance for those roads unable to meet such standards from their own resources. If this is done, passenger trains could be operated at speeds of 80 miles an hour; Federal Railroad Administration track safety regulations allow passenger train operation at speeds up to 80 miles an hour on any track maintained for freight train speeds of 41 miles an hour or over. And if Research and Development progress results in locomotives with a 'feather touch' on the track, these speeds could be increased to 90 or 100," Mr. Haswell predicted.

Directors of NARP were all relected at the meeting: They are: Mr. Haswell, a Chicago attorney; Edmund K. Faltermayer of FORTUNE Magazine, New York; Attorney Andrew P. Goldstein of Washington; Otto Janssen, Hopewell, N.J. public relations counsel; Barry C. Phelps, Chicago investment banker; Attorney Charles W. Schoeneman of Washington and W. James Truettner, Jr., Winchester, Virginia, investment counselor. (Photos Page 3)



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS**

Vol. 7, No. 4

April 1973

DOES THE PUBLIC REALLY DESIRE MODERN TRAINS?

Read These Comments by Steve Johnson in the Des Moines Register

Dear Readers:

I've never gotten so much mail about one story in all my life!

Oh, people write to complain about a political story or to take me to task for paning a rock and roll show, but most of the time my mailbox here is empty.

So it came as a great surprise to me that so many of you out there took the time to sit down and write to me about my train story in last Sunday's Register, "An Elegant Way to Go."

I wrote about the trip I took from Osceola to Denver and back on Amtrak's "Denver Zephyr," and, to be perfectly frank, I had the time of my life.

Aspiring young reporters are conditioned to look with a jaundiced eye at everything and everybody, so I suppose I could have gotten off a

"Trains Aren't What They Used to Be" kind of story.

I didn't have it in me. My objectivity melted away with the miles, and I put away my camera and notebook and just enjoyed myself.

My sense of joy must have come through in the story, because I've been inundated with mail from Iowa's railroad buffs and people who'd like more information on how they can ride the train and share in my experience.

The mail this past week has convinced me of one thing: there is a great hunger for trains and for stories about trains.

Mrs. Clara Black of Des Moines wrote that "it is wonderful to read something that is about anything in this day of deriding everything."

Mr. J. J. Fisher, also of Des Moines, shared his mem-

ories with me:

"When I was a boy, my greatest hero was a railroad engineer piloting a string of cars with a mammoth engine. In those days the mournful whistle of a steam locomotive was something, especially at night."

Some of our readers jotted down some very interesting and perceptive observations about passenger trains. Mr. Fisher feels that "people have lost a birthright by not taking a train trip. I don't know anything more American and more satisfying in travel," he says.

"More relaxation with fellow travelers and a more enjoyable arrival at your destination."

Gas Rationing

And then Mr. Fisher sounds a more serious note. "With

gasoline rationing in the offing, more people will turn to other types of transportation," he predicts.

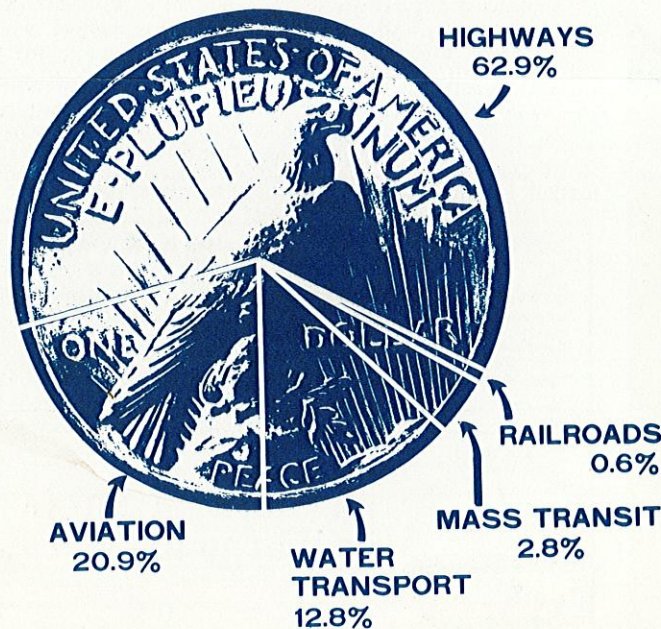
"With glutted airports and ticket cancellations, more people will turn back to the railroads, and there they will discover what you and I already know."

Maybe so, Mr. Fisher. Are we on the verge of a railroad renaissance? Let's hope so.

When I was presented with that Emily Dickinson poem it brought to mind my own favorite lines about the train, lines penned more than a half-century ago by Edna St. Vincent Millay:

*My heart is warm with the
friends I make,
And better friends I'll not be
knowing;
Yet there isn't a train I
wouldn't take,
No matter where it's going.*

How the federal government distributes your transportation dollar



Plans Underway For Senate Hearings On Bankrupt Northeast Railroads

Senate Transportation Subcommittee Chairman Vance Hartke (D-Ind.) reported this week in Washington on a series of consultations and conferences he has held on plans for restructuring the bankrupt Eastern railroad system.

The meetings were undertaken to unravel the complexities "of conflicting and overlapping proposals and to schedule properly the scores of witnesses who wish to appear," the chairman said.

"The complex picture must be brought into focus before we begin hearings or we will appear to have jumped on a horse and ridden off in all directions," Sen. Hartke said.

"Plans have been submitted by three railroads, numerous creditor groups, two Government agencies and several members of the House and Senate. We are about to receive proposals, also from the governors of New Jersey and Pennsylvania," he said.

Sen. William B. Saxbe (R-O.) has called for outright nationalization of the seven bankrupt railroads, Sen. Hartke recalled.



NARP ANNUAL MEETING

Annual meeting activity. At top left, Peter B. Bell, facing camera, chairman of the RAIL Foundation, with Otto Janssen, a director of NARP. Top center, Linda Sturgill registers Pinchos Andreen of Springfield, Va. Top right, Chairman Tony Haswell explains Amtrak routing idea to members during an intermission.

Second row, left, the head table (left to right): Attorney Charles W. Schoeneman, a NARP director, Executive Director Bob Casey, Chairman Tony Haswell and Mr. Janssen. Right, member interest was great.

At left, three directors of NARP enjoy an intermission (left to right) Barry C. Phelps, W. James Truettner Jr. and Mr. Schoeneman.

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 \$3.00 of this amount is for a one-year subscription to the newsletter.

- Contributing \$10
 Participating \$25

- Sponsoring \$50
 Sustaining \$100
 Life, \$500 or more

(Please Print)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

(NARP members should not use this form to renew. It would be helpful if members wait until they receive the coded renewal reminder.)

Amtrak Starts Third Year of Life Amid Mixed Bouquets, Brickbats

(Editorial)

The National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) celebrated its second birthday May 1 with a luncheon at Washington's Union Station.

NARP members of the audience had mixed feelings since NARP headquarters every day receives piles of letters, some containing high praise for Amtrak, most condemning it soundly. Added to this are direct experiences of the staff in Amtrak travel, some not very encouraging.

There have been accomplishments, i.e., increased frequency of the Metroliner, improvements in ticketing and reservation service, purchases of some new equipment, upgrading of some old equipment. But, more importantly, there seemed to be a mood of surprise that Amtrak has made it through two full years, *despite* the palsied hands of several railroad presidents "at the throttle" as members of the board of directors, and despite the manner in which top management has refused to permit good middle management people from executing their often sound ideas for improvements.

Despite the widespread belief that Amtrak was really established to give aid to the railroads indirectly, it has somehow stumbled into a role where it is of benefit to rail passengers, (which is the reason Congress SAID it was established).

DOT's generally favorable report on Amtrak, and the beginning of comprehension by Congress and the Administration that Amtrak can provide answers to the environmental and energy problems, plus an increased appreciation of rail passenger service by the people — all bode well for the future of Amtrak. But there remains a big shadow — the bankrupt Northeast railroads and the poor track and roadbed throughout many parts of the nation.

A solution to these problems would go a long way toward building confidence in the future of rail travel. Uncle Sam has a duty to provide this solution.

After all, would the United States Government permit potholes to remain unrepaired in our jetport runways?

Despite the fact that the Southern Railway System's Nancy Hanks passenger train is still legally alive, due to NARP's pending lawsuit, the railroad admits that it has been "cannibalized", i.e., broken-up and its components used elsewhere.

FRIENDS OF THE RAILROAD PASSENGER

Senator Charles H. Percy

Senator Charles H. Percy of Illinois provided the percentage breakdown of "How the federal government distributes your transportation dollar" (chart on page two).

Senator Percy, a Republican from Wilmette, Illinois, is a former president and chief executive officer of Bell & Howell Corporation. He was first elected to the Senate in 1966.

"Times have changed, and the nation's policies must change too," he said recently.

"We now know our energy reserves are limited. Public schools in the Midwest recently closed temporarily for lack of heating fuels. And, a few weeks ago, the nation's environmental protection administrator proposed that Los Angeles ration its gasoline to cut down on air pollution.

"The open spaces of the '50s are now mostly memories. Over 70 per cent of our population now lives in urban areas, and the amount of land used for rights-of-way for all roads in the United States has grown to approximately 35,000 square miles — equal to the combined areas of Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island and Delaware.

"Our transportation needs differ greatly from what they were in 1956, and our policy for 1973 should reflect today's needs, not those of 17 years ago.

"Today's transportation policy overlooks completely the interests of those who cannot or do not wish to drive — adolescents, the elderly, the handicapped — as well as the millions of average citizens who drive not out of choice, but only for lack of a decent alternative. It further ignores the real needs of cities, which generate over half the Highway Trust Fund's revenue.

"We have seen enough of bulldozers razing homes and paving over parklands to make room for more roads which quickly become so congested that no one can move.

"It is hard to overstate the mindless callousness of a system which permits a four-, six- or even eight-lane superhighway to rip through the heart of a city, tearing up entire neighborhoods and wiping out public parks and irreplaceable historical sites, all so that thousands of additional cars can crawl along at the grand speed of 15 m.p.h., causing intolerable pollution and consuming more of our increasingly limited supply of gas and oil resources.

"The system must be changed."

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 at the above address. Phone 202-546-1550.

Vol. 7, No. 4

April 1973

Anthony Haswell, Chairman
Robert J. Casey, Executive Director

Subscription is through payment of a membership fee to NARP, \$3.00 of which applies to a one-year subscription to this publication.

(Any material appearing herein may be reproduced without permission. Credit to the source is requested.)

Ross B. Capon
74 Craigie St., #22
Somerville, MA 02143
9/73-C

Second Class Postage Paid
At Washington, D.C.

RETURN REQUESTED