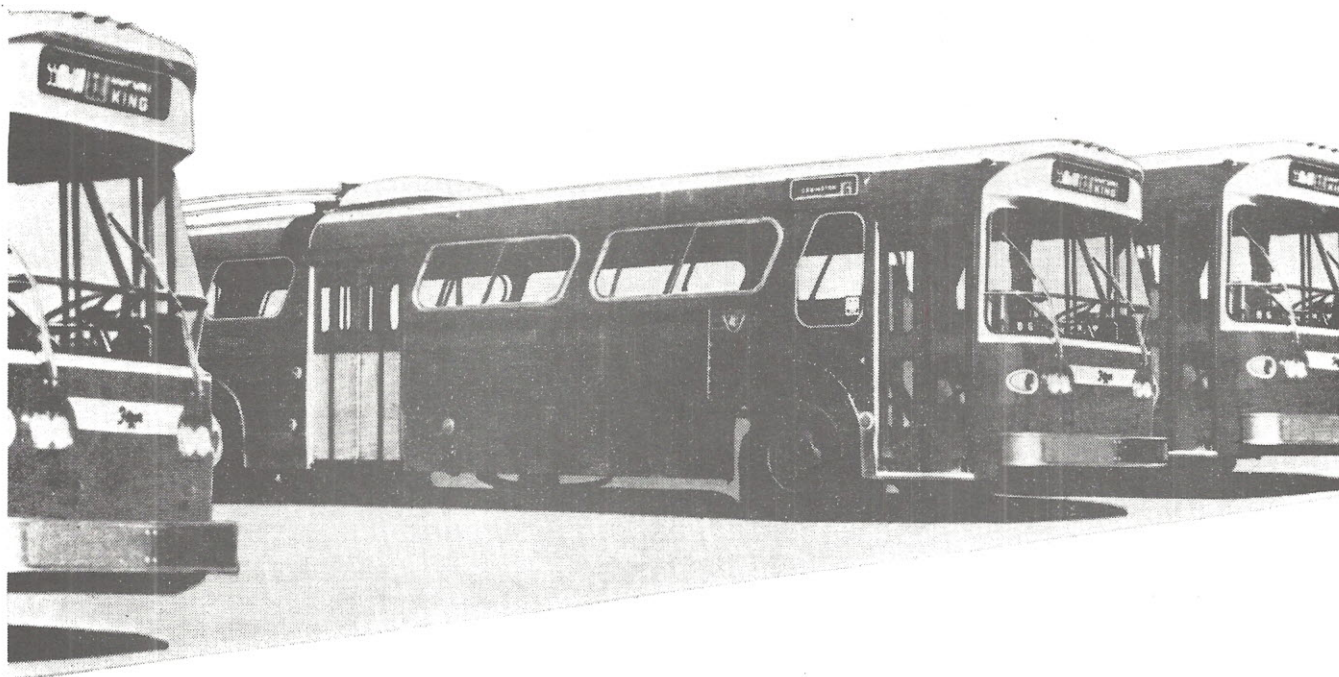


Transport Central

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21 SEPTEMBER 1970

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Paul Weyrich

NEW TRAMS AT LAST....BUT WHERE TO RUN THEM?

I have written before of my admiration for the overall job UMTA Administrator Carlos Villareal has done in bringing chaos into order and design in urban transportation. This judgement is further confirmed by his latest decisions on two counts.

In the first instance, Mr. Villareal has determined to take another look at the possibility of operating commuter trains on the RF&P and Southern tracks in Northern Virginia.

As readers know, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority (WMATA) has been attempting to build a subway system in the Washington area. Unrealists that they are, WMATA officials have projected its mileage at close to 100, with possible future extensions--all by 1979.

Your editor has visited with me in my office and will verify that I am not exactly elderly, but I fully expect to retire from useful service--if not life itself--before such a system is built.

On the other hand, for certain suburbs in northern Virginia (Arlington not included) the trackage of the two railroads would, in my view, provide the basis for an excellent rail commuter system. Such a move would render a good part of WMATA's planned empire unnecessary, and, moreover, service on the system could begin almost immediately.

This is not to say that Washington does not need a subway. It does, particularly within the city itself. But WMATA, having wasted millions on paper work, still insists that commuters in northern Virginia ought to suffer another decade before their problems can be solved. That is another decade on paper--the entire system will most likely never be built.

Villareal doesn't want to wait. Not only is he going to take another look at the commuter train possibility, he will in his own words "start a demonstration if one is feasible and see just where we stand". I am not trying to pre-guess his look at the situation; I only hope he can do something, and he should be entitled to everlasting gratitude for trying. Mr. Villareal is also pushing UMTA's role in operating express buses on the Shirley Highway south out of Washington, which is also a sound concept.

Another heretofore unpublished move by UMTA in the urban rail transit field which deserves great praise is Mr. Villareal's plan to initiate federal involvement in the light rapid transit or limited tram concept. Europe has done great things with limited trams, and we have all but ignored them over here. While UMTA is unable to come up with a great deal of money in this area, Mr. Villareal is the first Administrator who was even aware of the concept or taken an interest in it. He has, with the cooperation of Dr. Robert Hemmes, earmarked some funds to begin preliminary work on light rail rapid transit. Apparently the present plans for the limited tram concept include a brief study in which a site would be chosen for the operation of European-type (possibly articulated) trams to demonstrate their effectiveness over here.

--To Page 3

PAUL WEYRICH (Continued)

I would hope, that before plans are finalized, UMTA would give consideration to using the European-type trams throughout the United States. Not only would a great many more people be afforded the opportunity to ride them, but such a plan would also have the advantage of bringing new equipment to several communities where it is badly needed.

It is true that the light rail lines we have operating in the U.S. have enough dissimilar characteristics to make such a move a bit complicated, but such complications can be overcome. The cars could be built for wide-gauge so that they could operate, for example, on the Sharon Hill and Media lines of the Red Arrow Division of SEPTA outside of Philadelphia. It is quite simple, if they are built for wide-gauge to begin with, to adapt the cars for operation on standard-gauge track. The cars could be equipped with an automatic version of the covered stepwell used so successfully for years by the North Shore and CA&E, insuring their adaptability to high- and low-level platforms. At least, all of the light rapid lines in the U.S. use 600 volts DC and have overhead trolley systems, and this brooks far less complication than trying to operate commuter rail cars on the variety of systems in this country.

There are many places where such cars might be operated to great advantage. They could be tested on the Riverside line in Boston, right in Secretary Volpe's own back yard. In the New York area, they could be run in the Newark City Subway (which may be extended by authorities there).

The cars would be excellent not only in suburban Philadelphia, but on the subway-surface operation in the city as well. The Library line in Pittsburgh must operate for at least another eight (probably ten) years. PAT must spend \$6 million, under the terms of a federal contract, to fix up the line. What better place to run this equipment (which would provide authorities with an excellent contrast to buses and the Transit Expressway [SkyBus])?

Such cars would be welcome on the Shaker Heights rapid transit, which hasn't seen new equipment in many a year. Cars running to Green Road and along Van Aken Boulevard might provide a great test of acceptance by the wealthier elements of contemporary society.

Nor are the cars limited to the East. If properly adapted, they might even run on the Evanston line of CTA although admittedly it would be a departure from normal operating procedures. Think of the impression we could make on the government of Mexico by taking this equipment to El Paso and operating it on the International line to Juarez. And shoppers at Leonard's Department Store would welcome a test in Fort Worth. In San Francisco, the new Mini subway is on its way, and hopefully this equipment could spur San Francisco into standardizing its order for new equipment in order to unite with other prospective buyers.

Why, these cars might even be operated in New Orleans down historic St. Charles Avenue to provide a classic contrast to the Roaring 20's atmosphere produced by the existing equipment. The opportunities are many and varied, and I personally believe that it would be a shame to limit the test of these cars to just one city. The goodwill, enthusiasm and publicity for transit which could be generated by a nationwide tour of the limited trams might do more for UMTA than any other program it has in the works.

THE COVER: A reproduction of the first advertisement for new trolley coach equipment to appear in the North American trade press in more than fifteen years.

Ken Hayes

SP COMMUTER SERVICE: PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES

Are you familiar with the way commuter cars sway? In my two-month "experience" riding the SP during the recent AC Transit strike, I became quite familiar with this and other interesting facets of the commuter railroad business.

The SP has commuter cars of two major vintages: 1924 and 1955-68. The 1924 single-deck cars tend to bounce--up and down. The 1955-68 double-deck cars tend to sway--right and left. No doubt these features are due to the types of springing, suspension and car height involved. Overall, however, the train was more comfortable to ride than the bus. And it was faster, too. Even along uncrowded streets, the train could outdistance paralleling autos.

However, there are a number of important and serious deficiencies existing, along with possible improvements that might be made in the system. First and most obvious move is, of course, to replace the 1924-series cars with new equipment. Since newer cars have a greater carrying capacity, requiring fewer of them, and the cost of maintenance is lower the expenditure might be worthwhile. Stations, for the most part, are clean and well kept--except for Third Street, the San Francisco terminal, which is old and not very clean.

The same station causes another major problem. From Third Street, it is a 10 to 15 minute bus trip to downtown, or a 20 minute walk through a Skid Row area; this has been, is, and will continue to be a major deterrent to patronage of the trains. But the problem is not insoluble. A belt of tracks runs around the waterfront, at one point passing relatively close to the Third Street terminal. These tracks might be utilized to continue the present line closer to the downtown area. A more expensive alternative might be the construction of a tunnel connecting directly with the downtown area, obviously entailing considerable cost.

Several other notes: The SP passes within a mile of San Francisco International Airport, on vacant land adjoining which is now being constructed an industrial park. I'd say SP is missing a bet in not serving the airport to bolster off-peak patronage, in which area they lose a great deal of money. Instead, a separate rapid transit system has been proposed by various agencies, which would cost 10 to 100 times as much as an SP extension.

Want more? Why have brakemen on the train cars? They presently operate door mechanisms and announce stations; on other roads these are duties of conductors. And, coming down to the little things, why does the railroad use expensive safety paper for its single-ride tickets (worth \$1 to \$3) when it uses plain cardboard for multiple-ride tickets (worth \$10 to \$30)?

By and large, the Southern Pacific is doing a good job--but it is not the best possible. We have here the backbone of a future rapid transit system for the San Francisco peninsula. But the future can be made to happen now--waiting could be expensive.

EXTRA MOVES: Two trolley coach charter trips, both on Sunday, October 18, 1970. The first tours the entire Frankford Division in Philadelphia, departing Frankford Depot at 11:30 AM EDT. \$6 (\$7 on day) R. Seferian, 1075 Grand Concourse, Bronx 10452....The second tours the Lansdowne Division in Toronto, leaving Lansdowne Depot at 9:30 AM EDT. \$4 (\$4.50 on day); NATTA, c/o T. Gascoigne, Box 565, Oshawa, Ontario, Canada. Tour #1 will use a Brill; #2 will use both CCF and Marmon units.

newsfront

RAILWAY
REPORT

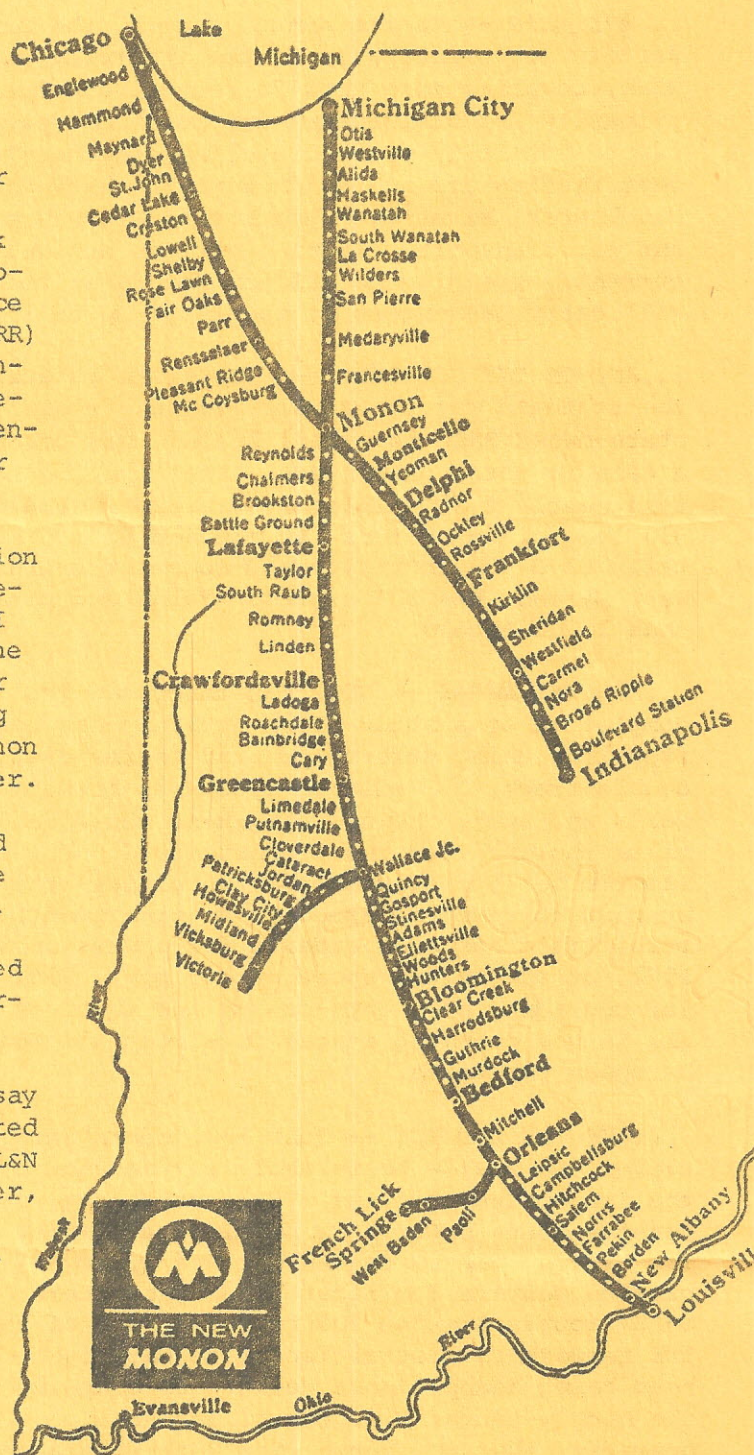
THE BIG GET BIGGER -- Approving a merger for the first time in over a year, the Interstate Commerce Commission last week gave its unanimous and unqualified approval to the acquisition of the Monon (once the Chicago, Indianapolis & Louisville RR) by the rapidly-growing Louisville & Nashville. L&N will thus gain a second gateway to Chicago; the road now shares an entrance to the Windy City over the former C&EI with the Missouri Pacific.

Seeking to calm fears that L&N acquisition of the Monon route into Chicago would result in a downgrading of the former C&EI line to Evansville (which is longer), the Commission ordered L&N to submit regular reports on service and maintenance along the route; the usual protections for Monon employees were also written into the order.

Until 1968, the Monon operated the famed *Thoroughbred* over its Chicago-Louisville main line; the road is now freight-only. L&N itself still has a fair measure of passenger service, including the isolated Chicago-Danville train whose fate is currently in the courts.

The actual merger, which the two roads say will save \$2,600,000 annually, is expected to take place soon, and will result in L&N growing to a 13-state, 6,340 mile carrier, with gross annual revenues sufficient to provide an annual net of \$30,000,000. Soon the famed "Hoosier Line" (there was even a song written in honor of the "rootin', tootin' Monon") will be just another entry in the *Railway Guide* listing of former carriers.

OVER THERE -- Despite the vigorous protestations of U.S. carrier executives to the contrary, it would appear that European railroads, largely state-owned, are making a profit on passengers. Two well-researched dispatches, one in the *Chicago Tribune*, another in the *New York Times* this past Sunday point out the fact that most long-haul services in Britain and on the Continent have been financially successful. British Rail, for example, showed a profit of \$35,000,000 in 1969, for the first time since 1953. And, for the first time ever, passengers became bigger business than freight, accounting for 53% of total BR revenue.

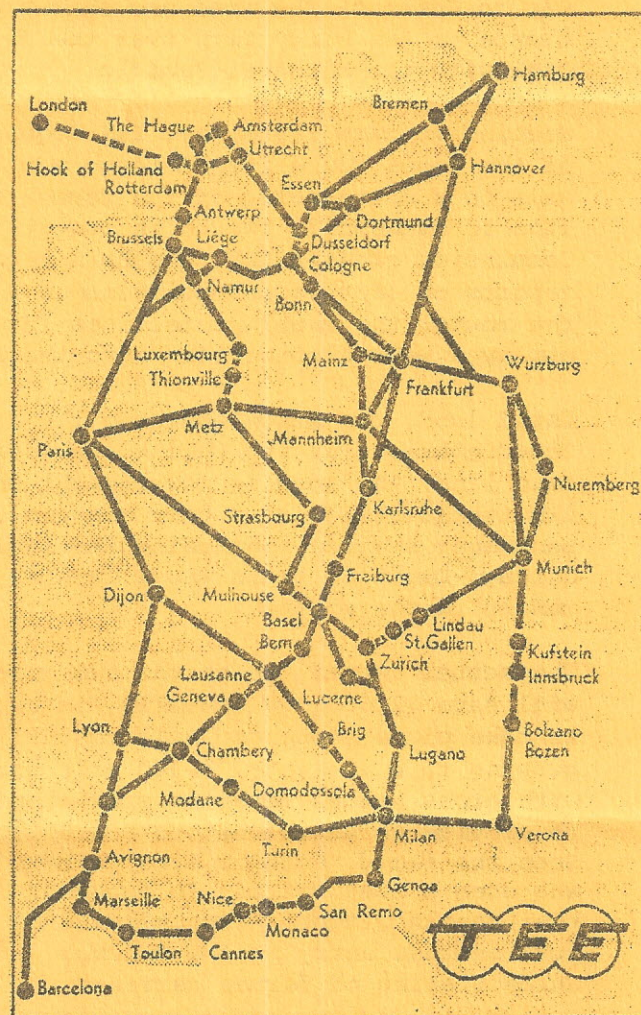


...AND MORE -- In its annual report, the British Railways Board said, "the growth sectors lie principally in the intercity passenger business". The intercity network, covering more than 70 routes, and operating 1,000 trains daily, is intended primarily for businessmen dependent on regular, speedy transport. Researchers estimate intercity train travel is growing steadily at the rate of 3-4% each year. Best results are achieved on routes between 100 and 300 miles, such as London to Manchester, Birmingham and Liverpool, where trains compete effectively with road and air transport. British Rail is actively pursuing the passenger trade, and is currently spending 10 million pounds on the development of a prototype train that will carry passengers at speeds of up to 150 miles per hour.

...AND ON THE CONTINENT -- The train is still the standard way to travel. France, whose state-owned SNCF is a rail leader, has posted a gain in total passengers. The Republic totals nearly 8,500 passenger trains, including 850 long-distance runs, as opposed to a U.S. tally of 3,900 intercity and commuter trains. West Germany has 527 express trains and more than 1,700 locals.

...LOOKING AHEAD -- SNCF has announced the completion of a study of an entirely-new non-stop line using turbine-powered trains over a double-track, 258-mile right-of-way between Paris and Lyon; the new alignment would be 70 miles shorter than the present route. For an interim service between the two cities (the busiest corridor in France), an experimental turbo train has been ordered for operation in 1971, at an average speed of 135 mph. Similar upgrading of rights-of-way and services are in the planning stages in almost all West European countries.

...TAKE TEE AND SEE -- Just how modern rail travel can really be is amply illustrated by the Trans Europ Express (TEE), whose comprehensive route network is detailed at right. TEE trains, plush, convenient and speedy, provide service for first-class passengers on 29 routes linking 100 cities. Most of the TEE network is electrified, with more overhead being added almost daily. By comparison, the highly-touted U.S. *MetroLiner* service, operating over one route (New York-Washington) averages about 80 mph for the trip, including three intermediate stops. SNCF's *LeMistral*, completely re-equipped in 1969, averages over 81 mph for its 535 mile Paris-Marseilles run, including four intermediate stops.



The New York Times

ON THE DOMESTIC FRONT -- Frisco president R. C. Grayson has called for exemption from state and local property taxes for the railroads....An agreement is very near for C&NW employes to purchase the road; Northwest Industries has extended its offer beyond the original September 15 expiration date.



metro memo

TIMES ARE TOUGH ALL OVER: II -- The Chicago Transit Authority expects to be in the red by about \$9,000,000 at the end of the year....The Cleveland Transit System board has been told by its comptroller that the company soon won't have the cash to pay bills....The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority expects a deficit of \$680,000 by year's end and one of \$1,500,000 next year...Bi-State Transit in St. Louis needs \$38,000,000 to carry out a transit development plan, but no money is in sight....Philadelphia's SEPTA is quarreling with the city administration over how to prevent the Authority from going broke....In Rockford, an advisory committee has told the city council that municipal ownership is the only way to keep the bus system operating. Perhaps those of us who have pleaded for years for a sound national mass transit policy, coupled with *enlightened* management have not been so far off base after all.

THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL -- Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe, speaking at the National Association of Motor Bus Owners' annual convention here in Chicago last week said DOT is considering establishment of highways for use solely by buses, or at times also by car pools, as a means of easing urban traffic congestion. Volpe also outlined DOT's other preferential steps: Installation of bus-actuated traffic signals; the metering of vehicle access to freeways with special bypasses for buses; and the reservation of one or more lanes for the exclusive use of buses during peak periods. Long-overdue, many of these stop-gap remedies could be implemented *now*, not tomorrow or the next day.

THE TWIN CITIES GET A REPRIEVE -- Several months ago (TC 23 MAR 70), we spoke sadly of the demise of a well-run bus company that was a credit to its communities, the twin cities of Menominee (Mich.)-Marinette (Wisc.); Friday, February 13 saw the last runs of Clem Bellemore's Twin City Bus Line. Now there is a postscript to that story. ATA's *Passenger Transport* has revealed that the two cities have contracted with Frank Butts' Iron Mountain-Kingsford line (a subsidiary of Wisconsin-Michigan Coaches, Inc.) of Iron Mountain to operate one bus along a seven-mile route in both cities on much the same schedule as TCBL. The new operation, which began August 17, will be subsidized to the tune of \$2,000 from each city annually.

ONCE OVER QUICKLY -- National priorities: Americans will spend nearly \$3 billion on golf this year, more than 10 times last year's federal budget for mass transportation....A \$50,000,000 electric overhead tramway system to run along the Las Vegas Strip has been proposed by a group of Dallas businessmen; the line would run from McCarron airport to downtown, with stops at numerous gaming houses.



airline action

ROUTES AND RATES -- President Nixon will probably ask Congress to boost the airline ticket tax to 8½% from 8% and the head tax on foreign flights from \$3 to \$5 to pay for armed guards on international flights; the Chief Executive has asked for a \$28,000,000 appropriation this fiscal year for training and use of 2,500 security guards riding commercial flights....The CAB has granted Piedmont a new non-stop route between Norfolk and New York; the carrier was previously prohibited from providing single-plane service between the two points.

EQUIPMENT REGISTER -- Transportes Aereos Portugueses has ordered its sixth Boeing 727-100 for delivery next March and has also purchased two 747-B aircraft; Boeing now has 197 orders for the giant planes....Pakistan International, with the help of the Export-Import Bank, is buying three 707-320Cs....National is looking for a buyer for its two 747s; the carrier wants to standardize its fleet with DC-10s. National's current fleet consists of 25 727-200s, 13 727-100s, 13 DC-8s, 2 DC-8-61s; three DC-8s are leased. All of the DC-8s will be phased out when the new DC-10s are delivered.

JET JOTTINGS -- When the Concorde 002 SST landed at Heathrow the other day, according to the press, the noise and smoke were apparently not to be believed, thirty houses lost slates off their roofs, and residents moved immediately to ban the monster....At the same time, the Transportation Department has conceded in a confidential memo to the White House that the SST may have some harmful effects on the environment, but says they would be "minor"....PATCO air controllers and the FAA have come to an agreement that would eliminate further threats of slowdowns and sickouts in the nation's airport control towers....A new \$8,000,000 international airport in Tijuana is to be operational this month. Since the field is but 100 yards from the U.S. border, Mexican air officials are touting it as an alternative to overcrowded San Diego International some miles away.



naautical notes

SLOW BOAT TO CHINA -- A bankruptcy referee has accepted a \$3,200,000 bid for the *Queen Elizabeth*, now berthed in Fort Lauderdale. The buyer is C. Y. Tung, a Nationalist Chinese shipping magnate. Mr. Tung plans to convert the liner into a seagoing college, naming her *S.S. Seawide University*....The *Queen Elizabeth's* sister ship, the *Queen Mary*, has also fallen on evil times. Now berthed in Long Beach as a potential tourist paradise, not a single tourist has graced her decks, and the city of Long Beach, owner of the ship, has had to shell out \$33,000,000 to keep her afloat. Now two California agencies are investigating whether the city acted properly in spending any money on the project.



bus briefs

CARRIER COMMENT -- Blue Bird Coach Lines of Olean, New York, has acquired Chataqua Transit of nearby Jamestown....Moore Brothers Transportation of High Point, N.C. has been awarded interstate charter rights from North Carolina to four adjoining states and the District of Columbia subject to the condition that it either acquire control of Silver Fox Lines or show why such control is unnecessary....A Maryland federal court has ordered the ICC to explain why it granted the application of Ridgeway Motor Coach of Baltimore to purchase National Motor Tours, Inc., of Baltimore, a charter and special service carrier.

MISCELLANY

Sharp-eyed reader and long-time GM employee Tom Van Degrift has pointed out that the Madison Bus Company coach pictured on TC's cover is actually a model 709 unit, not a 712 as we stated. 63 709's were built in 1933-34; the coach seated 18. Tom is currently restoring a 1929 Model W Observation Parlor Type Coach; details and a photograph will appear in a forthcoming issue of Transport Central.