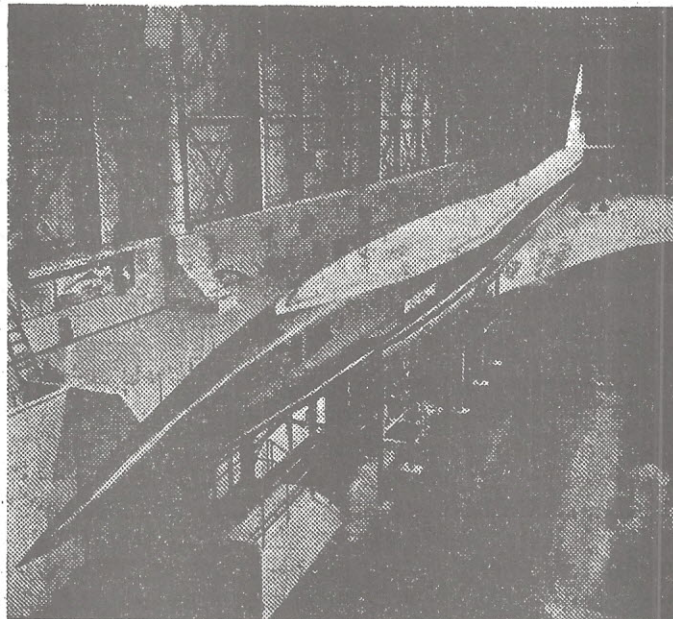


Transport Central



Exit the SST!

BY THE GRATIFYING vote of 52 to 41, the Senate has called a halt to the federal funding of a supersonic transport plane. The decision was made on an amendment by Sen. William Proxmire [D., Wis.] to remove the \$290 million SST allocation from the Department of Transportation's 1971 funds.

We've pointed out repeatedly that this

shared our view, and voted against the SST. For that they deserve the taxpayers' thanks, as do Proxmire and his colleagues who fought tirelessly to prevent a further waste of tax money on this noisy and dangerous toy.

The SST appears to be dead. Dead with it, we hope, is the idea that "progress"—meaning more and more complex gadgetry—is a

Real national prestige . . . will be based on the quality of our lives in America, not the quality of our machines.

project was a waste of tax money, an expensive indulgence of snob appeal, a shaky commercial investment, and a serious hazard to the environment as well as to human nerves. It had no place in a system of national priorities that has failed to provide for basic human needs or relief from poverty.

Illinois Senators Percy and Stevenson

sacred, self-justifying cause that must be advanced at whatever cost to human values and nerves. If we can now shift priority to genuine human needs like poverty, health care and the environment, we may achieve real national prestige; one that will be based on the quality of our lives in America, not the quality of our machines.

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column one

Some ruminations on Railpax:

It appears to this editor and several of his more articulate correspondents that the structure of the Railpax passenger train network is based far more on political considerations than economic ones, and that, in effect, the trains "go where the votes are."

Consider for a moment the basic nature of the network--long-haul rather than interurban in the classic sense. Remember the New York Central's "shovel-nose" RDC experiments, and NYC's big proposal to reduce all of its passenger services to runs between cities less than 300 miles apart? What ever became of that logically-sound idea? A glance at the Railpax map shows the greater preponderance of services geared to the vanishing long-haul or nostalgia market, and a lack of emphasis on short-haul runs that rail can do so well.

Consider also the fact that the proposed plan will directly isolate the U.S. from Canada by rail--none of the present international services are scheduled to be retained; some of the present such runs are at least marginally successful.

And, most importantly, note the lack of publicity given to the most important Railpax provision--discontinuance of runs presently operated but not assigned to the Railpax network by carriers joining the Corporation will not be automatic; the regular, currently-in-force Section 13a provisions will continue to apply, and any run a railroad proposes to drop must still go through the regular Interstate Commerce Commission abandonment procedures. Thus there will be no immediate wholesale dumping of runs in May, as many assume. A carrier will still have to prove a given train is "uneconomic" in order to get rid of it. Train buffs and the riding public can thank a Commission very jealous of its prerogatives for that provision. (And simply staying out of NRPC won't work either--not unless a carrier wants to operate its runs for a minimum of five years.).

--RICHARD R. KUNZ



airline action

EXIT THE SST -- There is an eloquent editorial in the current issue of *Traffic World* that takes a position in opposition to that offered by *Chicago Today* (the cover subject on this week's issue of *Transport Central*). *Traffic World* speaks of a transatlantic journey some three hundred fifty years ago, and says, "it isn't difficult to imagine that in the early years of the seventeenth century, when the Mayflower was built, there were people who deemed it wasteful and futile to spend so much money on construction of a conveyance so easily destructible by storms.

..."Giving of financial support by the federal government to the construction of experimental, prototype SSTs has run into vigorous opposition put up by many good, patriotic Americans, but it has the backing of many whose interest in developing and preserving maximum economic strength of the U.S.A. is fully as great and genuine as that of the opponents of SST construction...The conclusion that this country must proceed with the SST construction program it has started and brought well under way seems [to us] inescapable.

..."These, in sum, are the arguments Senator Proxmire (the most vigorous and articulate foe of federal financing of SST development) makes against advancing the SST program:

The SST development program gives promise of few significant public benefits; the net employment increase from the SST would be negligible, and the balance-of-payments impact of the SST could well be adverse to the U.S. No convincing evidence was found that a commercially viable Concorde will be developed and sold on the world market in quantities sufficient to damage the health of America's space industry. Neither that industry nor the U.S.A. will be made more prestigious by the spending of billions of dollars to produce 'an airplane which will have a seriously adverse environmental impact.' The total cost of SST development and production has been estimated at \$5 billion to \$7 billion. Operating cost of the 747s will be far below those of the SSTs. Three major environmental costs associated with SSTs are (1) sonic boom, (2) airport noise, and (3) possible damaging effects on the upper atmosphere through introduction of additional moisture and destruction of ozone.

"Among the arguments in support of continued development of the SST (and there are many), the most persuasive ones, it seems to us, have been stated by Henry C. Wallich, professor of economics at Yale and former member of President Eisenhower's Council of Economic Advisors...Dr. Wallich said:

One way or another, sooner or later, we shall get the SST. There is ... no escape, any more than there was from the automobile and television. The only question is whether it will be our plane or somebody else's. I support the proposal to build two prototypes now which will allow us to capture at least part of the market and to influence somewhat the ecological qualities of the plane... If my economist colleagues believe that the \$200 million which are needed now for two prototypes are needed also for other public purposes, there are ways of raising money other than by cutting out the SST. If I knew how, by halting the SST, we could halt all other supersonic flights thereafter, I would support doing that. Since I see no escape, I think we might as well have part of the market, continues the professor.

Continues *Traffic World*:

There will be a market for SSTs. Soviet Russia will try to grab part of it, and France and England will be 'in there pitching' too, with their Concorde. We have started risking a great deal of money to get a big hunk of that business. Should we turn back now? The Pilgrims were taking a great risk when they set out for the New World. They were fearful, certainly; but they did not allow fear to turn them away from their goal. They did not turn back."

But the U.S. Senate did "turn back", in refusing to continue appropriating funds for the construction of the two prototypes. By an unexpectedly lopsided vote of 52 to 41, Senators broke party ranks and crossed ideological lines to bar \$290 million for the SST in the Department of Transportation's \$2,700,000,000 money bill for the current fiscal year. And thus, unless a Senate-House conference committee somehow manages to restore the cut, the blow was fatal, and the SST is, to all intents and purposes, dead.

Some comment from this desk: The staff of *Transport Central*, in a rare show of unanimity, has come out four-square against the SST ever since it became a matter for public controversy, and we are gratified that the United States Senate has seen fit to discard the concept. It is a certainty that the Founding Fathers, in their infinite wisdom, did not conceive of a nation ruled by vanity.

MORE MUNDANE MATTERS -- A CAB examiner has ruled that major airline fares are "unjustly discriminatory - their present form". Examiner Arthur S. Present applied his ruling to youth standby fares, youth reservation fares, family fares and Discover America fares. His findings (which do not take effect until confirmed by the full Board) were that discounts shall not exceed:

Youth standby fares -- 33.3% (Previous discount, 40%)
Youth reservation fares -- 20% (Previous discount, 33.3%)
Family fares -- 25% for first accompanying family member,
33.3% for additional accompanying members age 12 thru 21,
50% for accompanying family members age 2 thru 11.
(Present rates are 50% for second member, and 66.6% for
other family members up to 11 years old)
Discover America fares -- 20% (Previous discount 25%)

The examiner also ruled that the discount fares should not be offered during the 24-hour periods starting at 12:01 AM on Fridays and on Sundays. He said youth standby passengers should not be seated in the first-class compartment of all two-class planes, and that family fares should be available only in coach, with the family members required to fly together on all portions of the trip.

He further recommended that Discover America fares should be available only on flights of at least 600 miles, to persons buying a round-trip ticket with a stay of not less than 7 nor more than 30 days, and that such fares should not be offered in first-class.

EQUIPMENT REGISTER -- Japan Air Lines has placed orders totalling \$169,000,000 with Boeing and McDonnell Douglas for four 747s and eight DC-8s. The 747 additions to the JAL fleet will bring the carrier's total of such craft to sixteen. ...Boeing will reduce its production rate of 747s to five a month from the current seven beginning in February. 203 of the giant craft have been sold, and 91 have thus far been delivered.

AIRBUS ACTION -- The British government will not support either British Aircraft's 311 airbus, or its counterpart from the Continental consortium, the A300B, its Aviation Supply Minister has told Parliament. The government's decision appears to pave the way for sales of Lockheed TriStars (Rolls-Royce powered) to state-owned British European Airways. BAC has already expended \$7,200,000 on research and development of the 311, all of which must now be written off.

ROUTE REPORT -- This following report, from a local Springfield newspaper, more than adequately outlines the growing controversy over just which level III air carrier, Hub or Chicago & Southern, will serve the important Chicago-Springfield market:

By W. Allen Manning

The Springfield Airport Authority and the City of Springfield have charged the Illinois Commerce Commission with acting in "blatant disregard of the public interest" in awarding the Springfield to Meigs Field in Chicago airline route to Chicago & Southern Airlines.

In an application for a rehearing on the decision, the city and the airport authority charged the Commerce Commission with awarding the certificate "exclusively to accommodate Chicago & Southern."

The Springfield-Meigs route had been operated by Hub Airlines on a temporary basis since June when Commuter Airlines went bankrupt. Then on Oct. 23 the commission cancelled Hub's certificate and awarded the contract to Chicago & Southern, which has been flying the route for the last three weeks.

Attorneys John Howarth and Hugh Dobbs filed the application for rehearing Wednesday on behalf of the city and airport authority. The airport authority is a taxing district which is responsible for providing air service to the district and for the management of Capital Airport.

The application for rehearing says the "findings of the commission are in part frivolous, impertinent, inaccurate assumptions of irrelevant, inconsequential and insignificant facts."

The application attacks Chicago & Southern's management, citing its safety record and Federal Aviation Administration violation and

also its maintenance facilities, past records of service, proposed schedule and its financial stability.

The Oct. 23 findings of the commission were attacked on various points:

— Hub's deficits of over \$700,000 are of no significance because the accumulated deficits are not derived from the Springfield operations. They were start-up and development expenses on many operations. "The disclosures were voluntary . . . no similar, soundly-based presentation was made by Chicago & Southern."

— FAA actions against Hub were of "no significance, minimal, unintended, inconsequential and did not relate to the safety of equipment or of operations." The past record of the management of C&S was not investigated, but ignored.

The application cites six accidents involving airlines owned by Frank Hansen who is the owner and chief pilot for C&S. The accidents include two fatalities and one incident of a landing gear collapsing when a plane landed Monday at Capital Airport.

It also cites three FAA violations by Hansen during August and October, 1967. Hansen was charged personally for operating an aircraft without having had an instrument check by an authorized pilot within the preceding six months. The others involved maximum weight violations. All were settled by paying \$750 in fines in civil violations.

Hub was fined for three FAA violations covering a period from July, 1967, to November, 1969. They involved

an aircraft not being inspected, a pilot operating an aircraft without a certificate and a pilot not being checked every six months as required.

— C&S filing first for the route is not material to the case. Hub is a continuation of prior service and their performance is totally ignored in the order. This is contrary to Illinois law which requires a finding, where a carrier is servicing a market, that it is unable to continue service.

— C&S is attacked for not having adequate personnel or maintenance facilities as they stated they did during the hearings. "That it had already been planned to subvert the personnel of Hub has become apparent since the order was made," and the record names eight such employees.

C&S is also attacked for using aircraft which were manufactured in 1941 and 1943. Spare parts are no longer manufactured for these planes.

— The reduction of service provided by C&S was attacked. Hub provided 10 round trip flights Monday through Friday while C&S provides eight, and three of those make a stop at Peoria. Based on a 22-day month and assuming all aircraft seated 15 passengers, Hub provided 6,600 non-stop seats and C&S 3,300. In its last full month of operation Hub carried 3,943 passengers.

"It is clear that C & S doesn't even provide the minimum number of non-stop seats required. This demonstrates a total lack of awareness of the needs of the traveling public on the part of C & S.

"It is obvious that, unless there is a business to be accommodated by this one-stop service at Peoria, there is no point in its being certified and provided. It is obvious that the only purpose served by the immediate stop in Peoria is to accommodate C & S."

C & S has had the Peoria-Meigs run since June 1969.

—"The unaudited financial exhibits filed by C & S reflect a total inability to maintain records in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices. C & S did not demonstrate an ability to provide a financially feasible system of operations" and the Peoria-Meigs operation is not economically feasible.

"Unless the service provided by C & S was better than Hub, then no possible excuse exists for the replacement of this service with the reduced service sanctioned by the order," the city and airport authority argued.

"The commission acted in blatant disregard of the public interest by granting a certificate to a carrier which has never demonstrated an ability to operate profitably and which is managed by a chief executive officer whose safety record manifestly demonstrates that the commission's order is detrimental to the welfare of the people of the State of Illinois."

The application further states that Hub's spare parts inventory exceeds the total assets of C & S. They also argue that Hub's maintenance facilities are surpassed by only four or five commuter air carriers in the country while C & S has none.

The article concludes:

"The application asks that Hub be granted permission to be in competition with C&S until final determination is made of the route.

"There is no reason whatever to place a financial burden on Hub while it pursues legal remedies," the application states. 'Cancellation of their certificate without compensation is confiscatory.'"

COPTER COMMENT -- Pan Am has proposed a scheduled helicopter service for the 400-mile Northeast Corridor. DOT approval would be needed for the plan, which would call for a one-year demonstration beginning next June 1. Under the proposal, cargo and mail service would be provided on a revenue basis, while passengers would be limited to non-revenue observers. Three Sikorsky CH-53D military helicopters would be acquired by DOT for modification and conversion, two for mail and cargo and the third for 12 passengers in addition to mail and cargo.

Pan Am said the primary objective would be to gather operational data for commercial development of a VTOL or STOL system between city centers; the CAB is currently investigating the establishment of such a system in the Northeast. Pan Am's proposed schedule calls for Monday through Friday service, with three daily nonstops between New York and Washington and between New York and Boston. Other daily services would operate between New York-Hartford-Boston and between New York-Philadelphia-Washington, all to and from heliports in downtown areas.

The craft would fly at 173 mph, and at or below 3000 feet, in uncongested air space. Timewise, for example, the New York-Washington run would take about 1:12, longer than regular scheduled craft, but competitive in terms of the downtown-to-downtown total trip time. The total proposal funding would have to be in the neighborhood of \$4,900,000, which could be reduced by up to one-fifth of that figure by revenue earned from mail service.

ECOLOGICALLY SPEAKING -- The National Air Pollution Control Administration has asked the nation's airlines to stop dumping 13,000,000 pounds of jet fuel into the air each year. The dumping occurs near airports and consists of the fuel that seeps into holding tanks during stops. In a letter to the carriers, NAPCA Commissioner John Middleton asked for voluntary cooperation, noting that the dumping is likely to increase air pollution problems in neighborhoods around airports.

SHORT TAKES -- The high-level White House Conference on Air Piracy takes place on January 11. Representatives from 60 nations will attend....The CAB has given tentative approval to the merger of Eastern and Caribair despite strong opposition by Pan American....The California PUC has granted small increases to PSA and United for intrastate flights, effective December 16. Hikes range from 3¢ on runs between San Diego and Los Angeles to \$1.73 from San Diego to San Jose.

Lufthansa will inaugurate Frankfurt-Warsaw service next April 1. Using Boeing 737s, the line will operate the run on Mondays and Fridays. LOT, the Polish government airline, has operated similar service since September 1965....Airline traffic has dropped to the point where a major revision downward of San Francisco International Airport expansion plans is being considered....A suit in the Circuit Court of Chicago has charged the Board of Education (owner of the land under the Northwest Ordinance of 1787) and the city with leasing Midway Airport land for an unreasonably low rate; the city pays only \$24,560 plus 10% of the gross revenues to the Board, about 1.5% of the land's assessed valuation.

railway report

"Thanks to legislation

Those train-offs hit a stall;

We'll ride into the sunset

On the Railpax Cannonball"

--Anon.

THE WEEPING, WAILING AND GNASHING OF TEETH -- has already begun, and it is bound to get worse before it gets better. Already the disenfranchised cities, towns, states and politicians are lining up with myriad objections to the Railpax list of "corridors and terminals". Perhaps the most significant omissions in the DOT proposal are services between New Orleans and Los Angeles and, most importantly, between Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland and Seattle; the lobbying has already begun to add those to the final list. Interested parties have until the year's end to file their objections; DOT has then until January 29 to devise a "final" Railpax proposal to hand to the NRPC. As noted elsewhere in this issue, trains presently operating but not included in the package must be petitioned in full accordance with present ICC regulations; they will not disappear as if by magic upon the activation of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation.

EMPLOYMENT REPORT -- According to the rail union publication *Labor*, the latest rail employment report from the Interstate Commerce Commission tells the same old story: there are "more chiefs and fewer Indians" on U.S. roads. The September report shows total employment on Class I roads to be 565,985, a drop of 1.80 per cent from August and 2.18 per cent below September 1969. However, the category of "executives, officials and staff assistants" numbered 16,517, a slight dip of 0.60 per cent below August but 1.61 percent above September 1969.

SIDELINES -- Reports *Newsweek*: "So complex has the Penn Central bankruptcy become that it has two of its own newspapers to keep track of the intricacies for interested subscribers"...The Interstate Commerce Commission has ordered an extension for 90 days in the case of those 22 Boston-Providence (PC) trains, while the wrangling over their status (intercity or commuter) goes on between the ICC and DOT.... The Illinois Commerce Commission will take a look at the proposed sale of the C&NW to its employees; Illinois Attorney General William Scott has petitioned the ICC to disclaim jurisdiction and turn the case over to the state body. At the same time, on the federal level, the National Industrial Traffic League has urged the ICC to expedite the plan, and not hold any hearings. The UP has opposed the proposal and urged the Commission to hold hearings on the matter; thus far the road is the only significant objector to the railway's plan.

AUTO-RAIL -- A new service to enable the family going to Florida on an extended vacation to ship its automobile down by rail has been quietly begun recently by C&O/B&O and the Seaboard Coast Line. The new "Auto-Trans" service is an extension of a similar service begun in 1969 by C&O/B&O between Eastern Seaboard points and the West Coast; that service has already carried 2,500 autos, is offered in cooperation with SP and has been recently extended to include St. Louis, Fort Worth and Houston. Auto-Trans is strictly a freight operation; passengers may elect to travel in any manner to the location at which they retrieve their auto. Delivery usually takes seven to ten days; the rate from New York to Jacksonville, for example, is \$175; to Tampa and Miami the tab is \$175. Some 16 cars are making the trip on regular bi-level flat cars each week in the Florida service. Pickup and delivery service on both ends is available at extra cost.



metro memo

SHORT HAULS -- Rail operation on El Paso City Lines' international streetcar line to Juarez resumed Sunday, November 29, after an absence of several months. ...From *Time* magazine: "Kipling's unmeetable twain have been getting together with a vengeance in Bangkok. The American presence meant money and automobiles; automobiles meant roads. So the exotic 'Venice of the East' filled in most of its famed canals and turned itself into a miniature Oriental Los Angeles--complete with fume-spewing, bumper-to-bumper thrombosis. To the rescue last week, during a two-day official visit to Bangkok, came U.S. Secretary of Transportation John Volpe. His prescription, typical of the inscrutable West: fill in the few remaining canals and add express buses."

Postscript to that item last week on the petition by West Towns Bus Company for purchase by the Chicago Transit Authority: West Towns has 265 employees, only 195 of them drivers. Thus, some 70 souls are required for non-operating purposes, a very high ratio among Chicago-area carriers....Two CTA surface routes, both of which feed the new rapid transit lines (30 SOUTH CHICAGO and 64 FOSTER-LAWRENCE) are losing their owl service; the latter's owl segment was only one mile in length (on a 30 minute headway)....Bus service on the late Theodore Richmond's Inter-City Bus Line and other affiliated companies will continue until June 30, 1971, under agreements reached in federal bankruptcy court in New York. The companies link New Jersey communities with New York City.

SOCIAL NOTES -- From *Commercial Car Journal*: "The Nevada Public Utilities Commission has told Reno businessman Joe Conforte that the profits from his house of prostitution lacked the degree of soundness necessary to allow him to engage in public transportation. Conforte, who owns the Mustang Ranch in Storey County, has been turned down by the state PUC for authority to operate J.C. Bus Lines in Reno. Reno has been without transit service for more than a year.

When the previous transit company went out of business, Conforte offered to absorb \$60,000 in losses and to let all of the passengers ride free for the first month. In rejecting the petition, the regulatory agency said Conforte lacked the necessary experience required to operate a transit system. Reno mayor Roy Bankoffer claimed that a bus company that was financed by prostitution would endanger the city's sense of civic pride. According to all reports, Conforte runs the only legitimate brothel in the country."

[Editor's Note: Ah, free enterprise! In this era of government grants and creeping socialism, it seems indeed a pity to forbid such a diversification plan. Income from the world's oldest profession might go a long way toward shoring up an industry that seems to be floundering in a perpetual "red light district".]



bus briefs

RIGHTS REPORT -- Purchase by Wolf's Bus Line of York Springs [Pa] of all rights of Valley Transportation (across the river from Harrisburg in LeMoyne [Pa]) and a portion of the rights of Antietam Transit (Hagerstown, Md.) has been authorized by the ICC; the interstate charter authority of the bankrupt Succa-owned carriers is involved....Greyhound is to retain and refurbish 500 of its "Super Sennicruiser (GMC PD-4501 two-level) fleet; some 200 are to be sold at \$20,000 each.