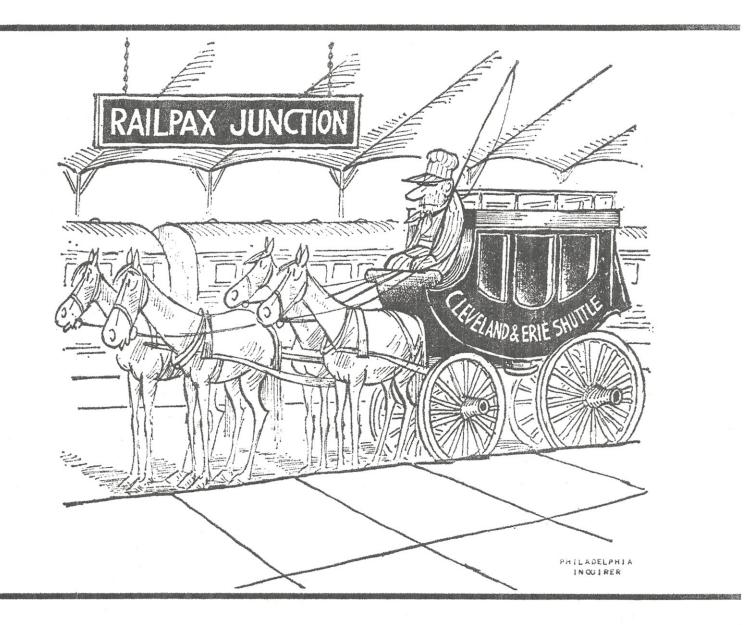
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Transport Central



RAILPAX: The Deadline Approacheth

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column one

In about ten days, the face of railroad passenger service in the U.S. will drastically change--Railpax (or Amtrak, if you will) is coming to town (at least a few towns, at any rate). In one fell swoop, more than half of the remaining long-haul trains will disappear, and those railroads unfortunate enough to be in the passenger business at this late date will have their onerous burden lifted for all time.

The National Railroad Passenger Corporation has been severely criticizedeven vilified--in many quarters for performing a "hatchet job" on the passenger train, at a time, critics say, when more--not less--are necessary if we are to minimize the damage man has done to his environment by bigger and better autos, highways, jet planes and airports. Understandably (though ill-advisedly), much noise has come from elected officials whose constituencies the skeletonized network will bypass.

It seems to this writer that much of the criticism leveled at the Corporation is premature. No one can tell--least of all armchair critics--what the results of the experiment will be; whether Americans en masse can be lured back to the rails by fast, clean and convenient train service or, as George Hilton says, the passenger train is an anachronism out of place in the twentieth century.

It is true that a lot of oxen have been gored, and many sacred cows slaughtered in an attempt to get the system moving again--but that is the name of the game. Management and labor have permitted the passenger train to deteriorate to such an extent that a transplant is necessary to save the patient--not a bit of Band-Aiding here and there.

The Corporation's plan to start restructuring the rail passenger network in a modest fashion is a good one; much must be undone before Americans can enjoy anything remotely approaching European standards of passenger rail service. It is far better, from both economic and public relations points of view, to gradually enlarge the basic system if it proves viable from a small beginning than to prejudice the entire concept by the customary governmental overkill policies.

A perusal of NRPC's scenario indicates sound and imaginative planning, even if one disagrees with its basic emphasis on the long-haul market to the exclusion of the 300-mile "corridor" services long touted by many inside and outside of the industry. With several significant exceptions (the bypassing of Cleveland, for one), the services to be retained have the greatest potential for future growth in a coordinated system; the bulk of the casualties were marginal at best and--most importantly--there is nothing to say that these services cannot be reinstituted at a later date by the Corporation--or by those governmental jurisdictions who have yelled the loudest at their demise.

Years of neglect make the rescue of the passenger train a herculean task, but at least a start is being made. The Corporation may not be able to work miracles, but it does have a plan, and the plan is worth a try.



BACK ON THE (AM)TRAK

I The quasi-governmental corporation that will take over the country's intercity passenger trains on May 1 has adopted a new name, a patriotic color scheme and a Madison Avenue-inspired "image" that it hopes will help bury the public's conception of trains as slow, shoddy and archaic.

The Corporation's new official nickname (which will soon begin appearing on the sides of trains, in depots, and on advertising) is AMTRAK, a contraction for American and Track. It will supersede Railpax, a *nom de plume* that some incorporators said did not provide a sharp enough semantic break with the past and the poor service that most American associate with passenger railroading. The handle was also change to avoid a conflict with a company that has registered "Railpak" as a trade mark for a waste disposal system. *(Perhaps there's a moral here somewhere--Ed.)*.

Along with a different name, the Corporation selected a trade mark--a red, white and blue design suggestive of the feathered end of an arrow in flight. The name, colors, trade mark and other features of the so-called "corporate identity package" were devised by Lippincott & Margulies, a Manhattan company that specializes in reshaping the public images of major corporations with new names, logotypes and graphic designs. L&M clients have included, RCA, Eastern Air Lines, Xerox Corporation and Uniroyal. The name and arrow design will be painted on all trains in the Amtrak system, and used on tickets, timetables, uniforms, baggage checks, advertising copy and other system material.

At a news conference heralding the new image, L&M displayed a sketch of the uniform that "hosts" assigned to some trains to look after passenger problems are to wear. Instead of the traditional dark, brass-buttoned suit and cap of a conductor, the hosts will wear red blazers abd dark blue slacks. Comparable outfits are being designed for conductors and hostesses, who will ride some trains.

With sketches, upholstery swatches and a model car, the design firm also showed ideas under consideration for the eventual face-lifting of many of the 1,000 passenger cars to be used on the system. The features included wall-to-wall carpeting, simulated wood-grain paneling and pastel upholstery. L&M was paid a total of less than \$100,000 for the design work.

Spokesmen for Lippincott & Margulies said AMTRAK had been chosen after a selection process that started with about 1,000 candidate names. The object was to find a word that was hort, easy to remember, and conveyed a sense of speed and modernity, and was not restricted to rail travel, since the Corporation hopes to some day offer service on high-speed trains that travel on a cushion of air rather than wheels. The list was gradually narrowed after public surveys to measure such factors as the "memorability" of various alternates and what they conveyed to the public. The finalists included Unitrak, Span and Track and Amtrax.

¶ At the same time, the Corporation announced its choice of an advertising agency, a decision that raised some eyebrows. The firm, Ted Bates & Company, of New York City, is the country's fourth largest shop, and has been involved in two landmark false advertising cases. Bates has also handled many campaigns in which no deception was alleged, and it is by no means the only large ad agency facing government allegations of deception. The two significant cases in which Bates was charged with false advertising were a series of Colgate Rapid Shave commercials in 1965 (agency and client were found guilty); and FTC allegations of false nutritional advertising for bread and snack items manufactured by ITT Continental Baking Company (still pending in court).

Despite the "track record" of the agency, Railpax incorporators voted unanimously in favor of Bates over presentations made by other shops, and emphasized that the Corporation plans an honest advertising campaign. However, "hard sell" advertising would be "the name of the game" once Amtrak has good passenger service available. Incorporator Catherine May Bedell declined to comment on Bates' involvement in the false advertising cases, but sources close to the board said the body had discussed the cases and decided "this would not interfere with the ability of the firm" to do an honest and effective job for Amtrak.

1 At press time, 15 of the 22 railroads currently operating intercity passenger trains had thrown in their lot with Railpax; only one (Rock Island) had definitely decided to stay out, while recurring rumors had it that Southern also plans to refuse membership because the entry price would be too step *vs.* the cost of main-taining its present passenger services until 1975. Thus far, B&O, C&O, C&NW, GTW, GM&O, IC, L&N, MP, N&W, WP, RF&P, SCL, SP, UP and ATSF are in; no decision has come from MILW, BN, D&RGW, PC (which will come in, but agreements have to be okayed by the bankruptcy referee), SRS (see above) and D&H; Rock Island is the twenty-second road involved.

I Also at press time, the governors of five states (New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Maryland) and the mayors of six cities (Cleveland, Toledo, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Trenton and Newark) have asked for a six-month delay in the implementation of Amtrak plans (from May 1 to November 1) "to permit further consideration of this final plan". Despite these moves, the Corporation still plans to begin operation on May 1, unless a last-minute injunction (still a possibility) intervenes. In Chicago, for example, Mayor Daley will participate in ceremonies at Union Station marking the start of Amtrak operations. Incorporator David Bradshaw, a Chicago attorney, said he and the mayor will preside in a brief ceremony before the 11:00 AM departure of the first Chicago-Seattle train of Amtrak.

¶ Railpax Ramifications: Amtrak has issued its first timetable--a 28-page folder with schedules of all 184 Amtrak trains over 21 routes...Those Santa Fe services remaining under the Amtrak banner will move to Chicago's Union Station from Dearborn Station "as soon as possible", paving the way for final closure of the ancient Dearborn terminal. After May 1, the sole tenant other than ATSF would be

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N&W, with its daily Chicago-Orland Park round trip commuter run, and that road is making plans to establish a "depot" on land adjacent to Dearborn. (The same road operates a Chicago-Decatur round-trip, and the L&N the controversial "Danville Flyer"--kept operating for more than a year by various court orders--out of Dearborn; Illinois Attorney General William Scott has filed suit to prevent their discontinuance by labelling them "commuter" trains, and such action may delay closing of the historic structure). For the moment, four sets of Amtrak runs will continue to use IC's Twelfth Street (Central) station: service to Florida, Cincinnati, New Orleans and Carbondale; switching problems prevent their immediate move to Union Station, although Rock Island runs (commuter and non-Amtrak) will move to the Jackson-Canal terminal "soon". Amtrak is actively pushing for consolidation of all its Chicago operations at one terminal in order to effectively control station costs, a large part of the Corporation's budget.

In Willits (California), Amtrak or no Amtrak, the famed California Western SKUNK and SUPER SKUNK will continue to Fort Bragg. Operators of the line are not members of Amtrak because no one asked them to join...Rail unions intend to contest in court the government's plan for protecting workers who will be laid off when Amtrak begins operating May 1, contending it is "deficient"....Correcting a pair of minor errors in our recent list of Amtrak services: The frequency of service over the Seattle-San Diego route will be twice daily Seattle-Portland; Tri-weekly Portland-Oakland, Daily Oakland-Los Angeles and twice daily Los Angeles-San Diego. Apparently there will be through service Seattle-Oakland, and Oakland-Los Angeles.... Correct the list of stops on the Chicago-St. Louis run (GM&O, twice daily) to read Joliet-Pontiac-Bloomington-Lincoln-Springfield-Alton-St. Louis.

I Amplifying an earlier item above by the addition of data just released, Southern will definitely not join Amtrak, according to the NEW YORK TIMES, nor will SRS subsidiary Alabama Great Southern (altho Central of Georgia, also in the SRS family, is in). Southern has regarded passenger service as a valuable part of its public relations effort and has relatively small passenger deficits. The defection means that SRS will continue to operate the SOUTHERN CRESCENT between Washington and New Orleans, rather than Amtrak (which will connect with the train on both ends as a part of its own network. Southern will also maintain the daily PIEDMONT, between Washington and Atlanta, and the thrice-weekly Asheville-Salisbury service.

¶ More developments in the fast-changing situation continue to pour into this office even as the issue is being made up. The NEW YORK TIMES also reports that Ohio governor Gilligan has pledged to raise \$1,350,000 in state funds to guarantee continued operation of passenger rail service along the southern shore of Lake Erie that would have been dropped with the advent of Amtrak. He is attempting to persuade his fellow governors, Shapp of Pennsylvania, Rockefeller of New York and Whitcomb of Indiana to seek their shares of the necessary funding that would provide for two daily round trips between Chicago and Buffalo via Cleveland. Under the Amtrak rules, New York would have to kick in \$920,000; Pennsylvania \$75,000; and Indiana \$390,000 for maintenance of the service, and the Corporation has indicated that it would proceed with plans for the trains' inclusion if each governor would merely promise that he would ask his respective legislature for the funding. Gilligan's move would appear to undercut the effort noted above to postpone inauguration of Amtrak operation until November 1, an effort which was just joined by the National Association of Railroad Passengers. If the bid to continue the rail service by Gilligan were to fail, all he would be able to muster would be an Ash-tabula-Toledo run, and Ohio would literally be a "Gilligan's Island." Passengers for points east and west would have to journey south to the old Pennsylvania main line to catch their trains.

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¶ The WALL STREET JOURNAL reports that Roger Lewis, president of General Dynamics Corporation, apparently has been selected as president of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak). The announcement hasn't been formally made, but unofficial sources say he's the choice of the Corporation's incorporators. At the same time, President Nixon said that he intends to nominate Lewis for a fouryear term on the Corporation's 15-member board of directors.

The President, who is entitled to appoint eight directors, also said he will nominate John J. Gilhooley, chairman of Urban Industries, Inc. (which recently called off its plan to purchase New Jersey's Public Service Coordinated Transport bus system) for a four-year term. For three-year terms, Mr. Nixon appointed a former chairman of the Pentagon's Joint Logistics Review Board, Frank Besson; a Chicago attorney, David Bradshaw and UTU president Charles Luna. For two-year terms, the President tapped Catherine May Bedell, a former Representative from Washington state; David W. Kendall, the chairman of the Corporation's incorporators and Transportation Secretary John Volpe. The remaining directors are to be elected annually--three by common-stockholding railroads, and four by preferred stockholders if the Corporation makes a public offering.

¶ Still more Railpax notes: Michigan governor Milliken has an option of continuing Detroit-Toledo rail service at a cost to the state of \$250,000....Service to Houston from Chicago will operate via Dallas (as opposed to Fort Worth) upon the completion of a new Dallas station; the Dallas Union Station property "is no longer available"....The SOUTH WIND (Chicago-Florida Amtrak train) will be operated via Atlanta at a later date, instead of via Birmingham....At least four railroads with U.S. intercity passenger service of a considerable distance were not offered contracts by Railpax: Northwestern Pacific, the Georgia Railroad, the Long Island Railroad (service to Montauk consumes 124 miles in reaching there from Penn Station), and the cross-Maine run of the Canadian Pacific (despite the fact that it operates over the several hundred U.S. miles in the wee hours, it still does some local business)....There will continue to be through service between Washington and Cincinnati; the train will be consolidated with Norfolk-Cincinnati service at Charlottesville, Va.

¶ And more: Amtrak plans to offer jazz, movies, bargain youth fares and perhaps beauty salons, barber shops and boutiques in hopes of persuading Americans to take to the rails again. In addition to such amenities, Amtrak has under consideration other proposals, among them sales of tickets good for unlimited mileage for a given period; emphasis on attracting youth with special discount fares and tours, including some catering to young people's concern for nature and the environment; and special amenities such as beauty parlors, showers, large lounges and small shops on board its runs.

¶ Financial facts: NRPC will reimburse participating railroads for their out-ofpocket costs for operating the service. Under the terms of a typical contract, the participating road will provide the service called for by Amtrak and will be reimbursed for its direct necessary costs, or those costs it wouldn't incur if the individual trains were not operated. For the Penn Central, for example, this means there wouldn't be any reimbursement for expenses in connection with stations it must maintain anyway for its commuter operations. In addition, a railroad may charge off other provable "avoidable" costs, or in lieu of this may add 5% to its bills for direct costs. The roads may tack on an additional 4% by assuming liability for all injuries and deaths incurred by rail passengers, but Amtrak wants to drop this to 2% by December 1, 1971.

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¶ One of the more significant goals of the Corporation is a major revival of service in the Boston-New York-Washington corridor that could largely supplant air shuttles before the middle of the decade. Amtrak will continue service in the Northeast region with only minor changes on May 1, but NRPC officials talk of doubling the train schedule by autumn, and of halving the conventional running times in the foreseeable future.

A major element in their plans is the calculation that the airlines now flying the congested corridor lanes have lost their battle to make the service profitable, even at sharply rising fares, and will support public investments in radical track improvement and happily retire from the competition; Eastern's unsuccessful attempt to drop its Newark-Washington shuttle last year and American's help in designing the Corporation's food and reservation services are both cited as more than symbolic evidence of historic transition.

NRPC board members and staff acknowledge that the Northeast Corridor is the heart of their system, though it is not simple favoritism, they say, and it works two ways. The sevenstate region between Washington and Boston will be the first area to see an expansion of train service in more than a generation; more than half of the 184 daily trains in the opening national network will run within that region.

At the same time, four long-haul routes to the West Coast that have no prospect of breaking even will be subsidized at least partially by revenues from the Northeast Corridor. Further, the prospects of expanded corridor service elsewhere in the U.S. (Chicago-St. Louis, for example) will hang largely on the success of the Northeast model.

LONG AND SHORT HAULS

¶ Any station consolidation in Chicago (whether as a result of Amtrak or other circumstances) would, according to Mayor Daley, free some 400 acres in the South Loop area for other purposes. ...On April 24, a new Burlington Northern Chicago-to-Seattle fast mail train will make its maiden trip with a promise to the Postal Service that its 30 cars will arrive in the Pacific

Northwest within 50 hours 95 per cent of the time. The train will operate daily under a long-term contract, hauling 3rd and 4th class mail plus some letters, shaving 24 hours off delivery of such postal matter to the Northwest.

¶ A group of Long Island businessmen and the United Transportation Union have accused the Metropolitan Transportation Authority of seeking to abandon freight service on the Long Island Railroad, citing deterioration of the service. A spokesman for operator MTA denied the charges....Those with a bone to pick with Amtrak may write the National Railroad Passenger Corporation, 955 Pierre L'Enfant Plaza, Washington, DC....The weekend of April 24-25 will see two of the first mainline steam excursion offered in Northern Ohio in many months. Ex-Reading Niagara (4-8-4-) #2102 will pull both trains, out of Akron on the AC&Y, departing at 9 AM each day.

metro memo

CITY LINES

¶ Mayor Daley has selected Michael Cafferty, an assistant secretary of the Department of Transportation and former Seattle transportation consultant, to be the successor to the late George DeMent as Chicago Transit Authority board chairman... That New York City Transit Authority express bus from the Yorkville section of the Upper East Side to Wall Street has done surprisingly well, more than doubling its initial volume in a week and a half....The North Western has been permitted to impose a 7 per cent boost in Chicago area commuter fares effective May 1. The same road also posted a 2.7 per cent loss of riders in 1970, the first decrease in patronage since 1962....The ten-day Philadelphia transit strike finally ended April 21, although union leaders had ordered their men back to work 5 days before.

¶ The Democrats have introduced their own transit assistance bill in the Illinois legislature as a counter to the Republican measure (TC 05 APR 71). This measure provides for a much as \$50,000,000 in operating subsidies to the state's transit carriers; the Republican bill offers capital grant funds only....French Premier Jacques Chaban-Delmas has proposed a new tax on businesses to help pay for modernizing city bus, subway and commuter rail lines. The tax would relieve central city taxpayers of the burden for services that aid an entire metropolitan area.... A dial-a-bus system will be introduced in two southwestern areas of the city by the Regina Transit System this autumn....The federal government is unlikely to subsidize urban mass transit operating costs, but may help low-income riders, according to Undersecretary of Transportation James M. Beggs, by partly paying their transit fares in one form or another.

¶ All of the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District's new General Motors coaches are now in service in that Illinois city; the 22 remaining leased buses from other ATE properties have been returned...Bi-State has begun special bus service to racing events at Cahokia Downs, and will resume regular seasonal service to the St. Louis Cardinals games at Busch Memorial Stadium as appropriate this year; BSTS in 1971 will have 14 special routes, up one from last year...Highway Products (Kent, Ohio) is now offering 25 to 33-passenger Twin Coaches fueled by LP gas; one is already in service at the University of California Santa Cruz campus...Natural gas will fuel the 19 minibuses on order for downtown Los Angeles SCRTD service...An 80 hp Rankine cycle engine is being developed by Sundstrand Aviation for installation in a 25-passenger bus (built by Twin Coach) to be used a demonstration vehicle by the Dallas Transit System.



THE PING PONG PETITIONS

¶ In the wake of the successful journey into China by the U.S. Ping Pong team, two U.S. air carriers have filed petitions with the CAB for direct service to the Peoples' Republic. United was first, with a bid to extend its route network from Hawaii to Peking, Shanghai and Canton, with American coming in a close second in a move to serve undisclosed mainland points. Much red tape stands in the way of a grant of such authority; no U.S. carrier has served China since the government headed by Mao Tse Tung took control of the Chinese mainland in 1949.