

Highway Fighters Organize National Coalition

The Highway Action Coalition, a new Washington-based group, is out to "Bust the Highway Trust."

Theodore Kheel, prominent New York labor mediator and chairman of the Coalition's Advisory Board, recently lashed out at the Highway Trust Fund, saying "this economic structure has provided the impetus for massive subsidies to the auto-related mode of travel and forced the public transportation systems of this country, be they rail or bus, literally out of business in many cases. The neglect of transportation for people is criminal."

The Highway Trust Fund is the government's mechanism which pumps billions of dollars into new superhighway construction each year. The Highway Action Coalition (HAC) hopes to open up this fund to other forms of transportation, primarily urban mass transit.

At a press conference announcing the Coalition's formation, HAC Coordinator Linda Katz made available several internal budget memoranda obtained from the Highway Users Federation, a conglomerate lobby representing auto, oil, trucking and other pro-road interests. The memoranda indicated that the federation is planning to spend over \$250,000 to publicize the need for additional highways to the public.

HAC hopes to raise at least \$15,000 for its anti-highway campaign.

The Coalition has developed a "Plan for Balanced Transportation" as a guideline for needed legislative change. One part of the plan would transform the Highway Trust Fund into a Transportation Trust Fund, making the \$5 billion available annually for any valid ground transportation use.

HAC is also distributing copies of its master map, showing where major highway battles are taking place around the nation. At present this includes 146 different controversies in 40 states and the District of Columbia.



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A poll, conducted by the Highway Users Federation but never released to the public, was released by HAC which showed that a convincing majority of Americans who live in cities want cars banned from urban centers.

The survey showed that 57% of people living in urban and rural areas interviewed said that they "think it would be a good idea" to limit the use of automobiles in downtown areas of cities. Of people living in cities with one million or more in population, 66% favored the idea.

Ben Kelley, author of *Pavers And The Paved* (Donald W. Brown, Publishers, 60 East 55th St., New York, 1971, \$5.95) said the poll was "particularly intriguing" since it was carried out "under the sponsorship of a large national pro-highway organization — not for HAC or any other anti-highway group."

HAC has already earned battle scars in its lobbying campaign. On Nov. 3, the Senate Finance Committee diverted \$350 million in alcohol tax into the Highway Trust Fund to make up for the loss of the 10% excise tax on light trucks. The highway lobby is determined to maintain the receipts of the fund at the same level.

HAC reported to the *Washington Post* that "at a time of budget deficit, a \$350 million increment to the Highway Trust Fund is an absurdity. The fund has an accumulated surplus of \$3.648 billion (as of June 1971) and a forecasted surplus of \$786 million for fiscal 1972 alone." (next column)

AUTO LIMIT URGED FOR WASHINGTON, D. C.

The District of Columbia has been urged by NARP to restrict the number of autos coming into the city by "permitting only a limited number of vehicles per hour to enter from Maryland and Virginia."

Before a hearing of the D.C. Bureau of Air Pollution Control, NARP Executive Director Joseph Vranich said that "an automobile quota plan will jolt Annapolis and Richmond into the realization that their lopsided transportation policies hurt the District and are no longer welcome."

As an alternative, he urged institution of commuter rail service, carrying 14,000 daily riders at an initial capital cost of \$17.4 million, through formation of a District Commuter Train Authority.

"By using the criteria that each auto coming into the District carries 1.3 people, we find that commuter rail service could reduce the auto flow every morning by approximately 5,400 — or 10,800 auto trips per day," he said.

"Admittedly, this commuter rail proposal is not overly glamorous. The vehicles are not capsules gliding along at 300 miles per hour in a tube. There's no spectacular gimmick or slick attention-giving device here. This conventional commuter train system does only one thing — it works."

AMTRAK ON-TIME PERFORMANCE BETWEEN BASIC SYSTEM END POINTS May 1 thru October 4, 1971

Railroad(s)	End Point Pairs	% On Time*	Average Minutes Late
PC	NY-Boston	88.7	34
PC	NY-Washington	86.8	37
PC	NY-Buffalo	59.4	34
PC	NY-Chicago	67.5	42
PC-MP	NY-Kansas City	54.4	63
PC-RF&P-SCL	NY-Miami	49.6	66
PC-RF&P-SCL	NY-Tampa/St. Pete.	76.4	54
PC-SOU	NY-New Orleans	+	+
PC	Detroit-Chicago	79.1	39
C&O	Newport News-Cincinnati	86.6	29
PC	Washington-Chicago	56.5	85
PC	Washington-St. Louis	61.1	48
GM&O	Chicago-St. Louis	60.3	28
PC	Chicago-Cincinnati	63.8	25
PC-L&N-SCL	Chicago-Miami	38.1	66
PC-L&N-SCL	Chicago-Tampa/St. Pete.	48.4	65
IC	Chicago-New Orleans	47.3	54
ATSF	Chicago-Houston	87.2	64
MILW-BN	Chicago-Seattle	61.1	76
BN-UP-SP	Chicago-Oakland	46.6	65
ATSF	Chicago-Los Angeles	58.2	73
SP	New Orleans-Los Angeles	66.4	78
BN-SP-ATSF	Seattle-San Diego	37.4	65

* Trains are considered to be on-time if they arrive no later than 6 minutes behind schedule
+ Non-AMTRAK route

Highway Fighters, cont'd.

The pro-highway forces won in a Senate floor fight, but only by three votes.

NARP and HAC have established active liason in matters relating to legislation and educational programs.

HAC was founded by Environmental Action and the Sierra Club and recently expanded to include Americans for Indian Opportunity, Friends of the Earth, the Washington Metropolitan Coalition for Clean Air, The Wilderness Society and Zero Population Growth, and has made contact with over 350 local anti-freeway groups.

Further information about HAC is available from Linda Katz, Highway Action Coalition, 731 Dupont Circle Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20036.

RIDING WITH AMTRAK

"[Amtrak] appears to be coming under increasing attack from its competitors — the airlines and buses. Within the past two weeks: (1) The President of the Air Transport Association has attacked the use of advertising funds by Amtrak to divert passengers from planes to trains. (2) The President of the National Association of Motor Bus Owners has come out strongly against further large subsidies for money-losing Amtrak passenger trains. (3) The president of the second largest airline — Eastern — complained it is unfair for the government to subsidize rail passenger service while airline passengers pay the costs of running the airlines. . . . Why the airlines haven't testified [on Capitol Hill] against the additional [Amtrak] funding — while they express concern about it — isn't fully clear. It could be simply statesmanship. Since 1938 the airline industry has been the beneficiary of more than \$1.6 billion in direct federal subsidies — plus utilization of a \$1 billion-a-year federal airways system." — Washington Star reporter Stephen M. Aug, November 14, 1971.

Amtrak's new timetable: "Train arrival and departure times are easy to read and lengthy notes and exceptions seen in earlier schedules have been eliminated; reference marks and symbols are kept to a minimum. For example, only eight symbols are used in the new timetable compared to 88 in a typical pre-May 1 timecard." — Transport Central Magazine, Nov. 15, 1971.

"The railroads retain ownership of the tracks and give priority to their own freight trains. On a recent trip the *Sunset Limited* from Los Angeles to New Orleans sat on sidings a total of four hours to allow freights to pass and spent another hour and 10 minutes pushing a freight which had broken down." — Associated Press reporter John S. Lang.

"[We] wholeheartedly agree with the National Association of Railroad Passengers in their contention that Amtrak will get nowhere toward its goal of 'making the trains worth traveling again' until it becomes the official employer of those who are operating the passenger trains." — Rail Travel Newsletter.

SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN BOOSTS LONG-HAUL TRAINS

In a Nov. 16 speech, Senator Warren Magnuson (D-Wash) said, "I have always recognized that urban corridors are where the passenger train has its greatest potential. . . . Nevertheless, I am convinced that there is a place for a limited number of long-distance trains." Excerpts follow:

"Travel and tourism is a multibillion-dollar enterprise; leisure time and disposable personal income are increasing every year. Emphasis has been placed on attracting more visitors from abroad. Trains are the ideal way for these people to see the United States rather they fly over it.

"Figures recently supplied by Amtrak to the Commerce Committee for the months of May and June 1971 cast some doubt on the theory that long-distance trains are sure to be losers and corridor trains are sure to be profitable. It is true that the only route that was profitable was New York to Washington, Boston to Washington broke even, and New York to Philadelphia came reasonably close. Once past these runs, however, the financial picture changes in favor of long-distance trains. No less than nine long-distance routes — including all of the western transcontinental trains — had a better financial performance, on the basis of percent of expenses covered by revenues, than all the remaining corridors.

"I would like to see Amtrak explore to a much greater extent than it has to date the possibility of substantially increasing the amount of mail, express, and package freight carried on these trains, consistent with maintenance of high standards of service for passengers.

Newspaper clippings from members are appreciated. Each clip should bear the newspaper's name and date.

AMTRAK CUTS CORRIDOR FARES

Amtrak announced its first fare changes on Nov. 19, cutting rates on its New York-Boston route as much as 22%. The maximum one-way fare is now \$9.90. Before the reduction the fares were \$10 to \$12.75. The new fares were announced for "an experimental six-month period" and are "clearly designed to develop new rail ridership," said Roger Lewis, Amtrak president.

Amtrak Seeks Money, cont'd.

of most remaining long-distance trains.

NARP Chairman Anthony Haswell agreed. "The axes are being sharpened for 1973 when the administration officials contemplate that all train service except the Northeast corridor's will be discontinued," said Haswell.

Hartke and Haswell said the Administration's request for \$170 million is too low.

Senator Lowell P. Weicker Jr. (R-Conn) recommended an increase to \$420 million.

James M. Beggs, under secretary of the Dept. of Transportation, opposed the increase. He said the \$170 million would permit Amtrak to operate for a two-year experimental period to determine the "true place" for rail service.

Hearings shifted over to the House Interstate & Foreign Commerce Committee and NARP again testified for more money for Amtrak.

Rep. Brock Adams (D-Wash) said Amtrak may be paying inflated costs to the railroads which operate the service under contract to Amtrak.

Adams pointed to an experimental train that Amtrak operates via the B&O between Washington and Parkersburg, W.Va. He said Amtrak uses four crews on the 351-mile run, which takes nine hours and 14 minutes. He said that for more than 100 years there have been only two crews on the run. "Is the railroad over-crewing you and tacking 9% on top?" Adams said.

Amtrak President Roger Lewis answered that the B&O agreement providing for only two crews had lapsed, and that discussions are underway to resolve the matter.

Rep. Adams also said that western railroads have switched new locomotives used in passenger service to freight runs and are supplying Amtrak with much older, less powerful, and more costly engines to pull passenger trains.

Lewis said that Amtrak would prefer to purchase a new-design locomotive rather than use anything running on the rails now.

NARP has issued radio spots to 660 stations. They are available to members upon request.

Use This Coupon To Bring in a New Member Today!

National Association of Railroad Passengers
417 New Jersey Ave., S.E.
Washington, D.C. 20003

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 \$3,000 of this amount is for a one-year subscription to the newsletter.

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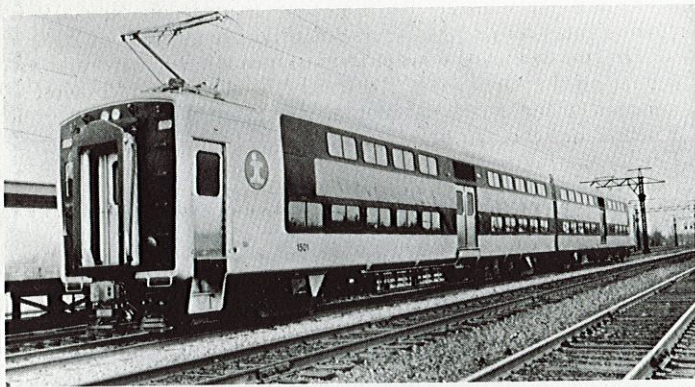
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Note: NARP members should not use this form to renew. It would be helpful if members wait until they receive the renewal reminder, and use the special coded envelope enclosed with it.

Those Lucky Chicago Commuters



NEW COMMUTER CARS — Pictured here are two of Chicago South Suburban Mass Transit District's new double-deck, air-conditioned commuter cars, the "Highliners", on the Illinois Central electric line. The 130 car fleet is being delivered at the rate of eight per month until the order is completed by the third quarter of 1972. Total cost of the commuter modernization program is \$39.9 million. IC has been stopping these trains near Soldier Field on Sundays when the Chicago Bears play home games. IC is also planning to extend the service approximately two miles from its present Richton Park terminal to Governors State University, a facility presently under construction at Park Forest South, Ill. The railroad said for September, the on-time performance record of the commuter network was 96.1% "which is good, but still not up to our goals."

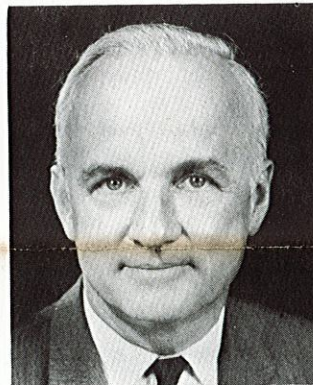
AMTRAK BRIEFS: The *Metroliners* have a new stop in New Jersey. A \$2.2 million suburban park-and-ride station was dedicated on Nov. 11 in Woodbridge Twp., just off the Garden State Parkway. . . . Amtrak has signed a labor agreement with the Brotherhood of Railway, Airline & Steamship Clerks (BRAC) to cover clerical and station employees working directly for Amtrak in the centralized Chicago reservation bureau. . . . Daily train service has been restored between Chicago and Quincy, Mo., and Amtrak plans to operate a number of "University Specials" to three colleges along the route during holidays. The train, named *Illinois Zephyr*, is subsidized 66% by Illinois. . . . The most expensive mile of highway ever constructed might be a one-mile section of I-95 near the Pentagon costing \$51.6 million — more than the Amtrak appropriation. . . . Georgia's Governor Jimmy Carter says he'd like to see the Savannah-Atlanta *Nancy Hanks* restored. He is recommending creation of a state DOT to look at trains because "highway lanes are becoming inordinately expensive."

FRIENDS OF THE RAILROAD PASSENGER

Rep. Peter H. B. Frelinghuysen

A recent newsletter published by Rep. Peter H. B. Frelinghuysen (R-NJ) said, "The time has come to think of a new partnership between government and private enterprise to give railroad passengers the fast and comfortable service they deserve. Such a relationship might even include government ownership and responsibility for the rights-of-way."

The Congressman's comments are timely since railroad tracks throughout the nation — for both freight and passenger — are becoming unusable for fast, dependable service as railroads defer necessary maintenance.



The NARP Newsletter reported several issues ago that trains in 1941 were faster than Amtrak trains in 1971. This is not Amtrak's fault, but is caused by deteriorating track conditions. Over poor track, trains must run at reduced speeds to insure safe operations.

Congressman Frelinghuysen also said as the Interstate Highway program is completed, "there is no reason why the massive flows of money formerly going into highway construction should not be diverted to other modes of transportation. The railroads with their existing facilities and rights of way should be the centerpiece of a solution of the transportation problems of our region."

NARP SUPPORTS

HIGH-SPEED PROGRAM

Congress has been asked by DOT to make the Federal Railroad Administration's High-speed Ground Program a permanent one. This program has jurisdiction for the Metroliner and TurboTrain demonstration projects. In light of the tremendous public response to this program, NARP is supporting the DOT request.

Second Class Postage Paid
At Washington, D.C.

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. 5, No. 11

December, 1971

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

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