Transport/Central

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Urban/Suburban

"WHEN DOES THE BUS LEAVE?" "WHEN CAN YOU MAKE IT?" -- Five Northwestern University students have suggested a bus system that would operate like a taxicab service, providing yet another alternative solution to metropolitan movement problems. A rider needing transportation would call a central computer, stating his origin and destination. The computer would coordinate his and other riders' trips and radio dispatch buses accordingly. The driver of the four to twenty passenger coach would thus have a load of riders with similar origins and destinations and could choose his own route to and from those points. Fares would be collected on board the bus, and a credit card system would be a feature of the novel plan.

BRIDGES, BUSES AND BOXES -- A seventy-year-old structure is to be replaced this autumn and in all probability its disappearance will be matched by one of the Chicago Transit Authority's dozen remaining trolley coach lines. The Kedzie bridge over the Sanitary and Ship Canal at about 34th Street will give way to a new, wider structure beginning late this year and when construction begins, CTA's #52 KEDZIE-CALIFORNIA route must be converted at least temporarily to motor bus operation. If the conversion becomes permanent, which is quite probable, it will be aided in part by the delivery of the first units of an order of 176 new motor buses, for which the advertising of bids was authorized by the CTA board February 14. The large-capacity units will cost a total of 5 million dollars. The CTA is currently the recipient of other equipment designed to improve passenger security on the rapid transit system. Being installed at several locations on the two Loop-area subways are police call boxes, connected directly with a department dispatcher, and for which no coin is necessary. If the units are effective, they will be installed elsewhere also.

TRANSIT TALK -- Chicago's other subway also "surfaced" briefly during the week. The more-or-less abandoned 42-mile system formerly operated by the Chicago Tunnel Company to haul garbage, cinders and other freight was suggested for use as an improvised lockup to hold rioters during the predicted disturbances this summer. Conceived in the '90s, the labyrinthine maze of tunnels some 40 feet below Loop-area streets has been dormant since the company went bankrupt some twenty years ago....Cook County (the Chicago area) has formed an Urban Transportation Bureau to develop long range plans for integrated county-wide transportation. The primary objective of the new bureau will be to co-ordinate highway and mass transportation plans...HUD has given Bi-State Transit (St. Louis) a \$170,000 technical study grant. It will be used to assist in funding the last two phases of a rapid transit study for the St. Louis area. (T/C - 12/1/67)....HUD has also given \$206,000 to Case Western Reserve University of Cleveland for a study of downtown transportation problems in that city.

MORE MEANDERINGS -- Lakeshore Transit (Racine and Kenosha, Wisconsin) has discontinued evening, Sunday and holiday service as expected. The company was unsuccessful in getting a subsidy from either of the two cities it serves.... Springfield (Illinois) citizens were a bit luckier. In a special referendum

February 6, area voters approved a measure backed by the company and local governments for a municipal takeover of the city transit system operated by Springfield City Lines. SCL had threatened to go out of business June 30, because of falling revenues, but now a transit authority will be formed to administer operations. New equipment will be purchased with the aid of a HUD grant and a local property tax, and routes and scheduling will be improved. The tax levy anticipated by the Mass Transportation Commission is to be approximately 2¢ per \$100 of assessed valuation.

ONCE OVER QUICKLY -- The Dallas Transit System board has asked the city council for permission to raise its basic adult fare from 23¢ to 25¢...A new DSR terminal (garage and shop complex) is to be built near downtown Detroit....Fort Wayne Transit has stated it will abandon all services June 15 unless the city buys its system....CTS officials have pushed for use of the new Airport Rapid line (as well as the rest of the system) to haul bulk U.S. Mail....The Central Oklahoma Transit and Parking Authority wants to install a paisley bus (a paisley bus?) on a shuttle line between an expressway parking lot and downtown Oklahoma City.

Interurban

TRAIN - OFF TRIVIA -- <u>Transport Economics</u>, the ICC's Bureau of Economics magazine for November-December 1967 has a detailed article on passenger train discontinuances. Briefly, the article states that

1) 1966 passenger revenues dropped to their lowest point since before World War II.

Passenger miles traveled were below any previous figures, and probably equalled those of railroad construction days.

3) Express revenues dropped from a 1944 high of \$144 million to a 1966 low of \$67 million.

4) Mail revenue, which peaked at \$330 million in 1959, was down to \$304 million in 1966. Though no figures are yet available, it was probably down considerably more in 1967.

5) In 1930, some 10,000 trains handled mail, while by July 1, 1967 (before the big removal of RPOs) only 809 trains handled mail.

6) Since 1958, 1612 inter- and intra-state train-off petitions have been filed under Sections 13(a) and 13(a)(2) respectively; 852 runs were discontinued, 392 ordered continued and the remainder consolidated or otherwise handled. This does not include state agency approved train-offs or discontinuances made in states where there is no regulation (such as Ohio and Mississippi).

TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE -- U.S. Rep. Helstoski (D-N.J.) has introduced HR Bill #15081 which requests amending Section 13(a) of the Interstate Commerce Act to read that ICC will give full consideration to all financial assistance available before permitting discontinuances or service changes.

VISIT USA - BY RAIL -- You can't knock the railroads for not trying, even when so many trains are dying: U.S. railroads have announced they will support the effort to encourage overseas visitors to discover America by offering 25% discounts on all first class and coach one-way fares.

SO CLOSE AND NOW SO FAR -- The GNP&Burlington Lines merger, rebuffed for over 60 years before the ICC reversed itself (T/C-1/12/68) seems further away than ever since Rio Grande protested the decision. The Justice Department also joined in the protest, and now the Milwaukee Road has reversed itself, too.