

Transport Central

30 AUGUST 1968

URBAN

OUR FAIR CITY -- As Convention Week wears on, and hippies, newsmen and bystanders alike are alternately gassed, Maced and clubbed on and off the streets of this civilized metropolis, the city's transportation crisis shows no sign of letting up. Talks between management and striking cab drivers have been alternately held and broken off, while the walkout by dissident CTA bus drivers that did begin as scheduled last Sunday has pursued an exceedingly tortuous path. At this juncture, action was proceeding on several fronts in the wake of the stoppage that halted about half of the Authority's surface operations. The CTA has instituted court action to halt the stoppage, while the Concerned Transit Workers, ignoring the injunction, have invited the CTA to recognize their group as the official bargaining agent for operators (most of whom are black). Meanwhile, Amalgamated local 241, target of the walkout, has voluntarily placed itself in trusteeship by the international board.

METROREPORT -- Two suburban lines currently using the Chicago Greyhound Terminal as their downtown station have been asked to stop using that facility when their contracts run out September 30. West Suburban Transit Lines (Lombard) and United Motor Coach (Desplaines) are the carriers in question; West Towns Bus Company (Oak Park) moved out last year to street-loading facilities for a reduced schedule of services. If the two carriers also move to surface operations, only Chicago & Calumet District Transit (with a small schedule of largely rush hour departures for Indiana suburbs) would remain with suburban runs from the terminal.

SEPTA SITS -- It appeared this week that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) will be delayed in assuming control of the Philadelphia Transportation Company (PTC) in order to allow the Philadelphia city council time to inspect contractual arrangements with SEPTA. SEPTA was originally scheduled to begin operation of the city's subway, elevated, streetcar, trolley coach and motor bus lines on September 30. It is now almost certain that it will be well into October before the transfer can actually take place.

SEPTA has ambitious plans for upgrading Philadelphia's transit system (it already oversees Penn Central and Reading commuter operations), however observers fear that a weak and inexperienced staff may hinder its efforts. Originally SEPTA intended to replace all non-subway surface car lines with buses as soon as money was available. However, revisions in the operating charter (which the city council is now studying) will make that move more difficult. Indications are that Philadelphia officials will insist that capital funds be used to upgrade elevated structures and make other improvements before monies are used for the purchase of bus equipment.

ONCE OVER QUICKLY -- DOT has released more than \$350,000 to the Memphis Transit Authority to further assist in improving that city's transit system....We inadvertently omitted AC Transit in Oakland a few issues ago from the list of properties with an exact-fare-only plan.... The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority is now set to take over Kansas City Transit no later than February 1....Red Arrow has raised school and children's fares....Metro Dade's Transit Authority (in Miami) will up all rates across the board by 5¢ October 1.

SUMMING UP -- The New York City Transit Authority has ordered 200 new air-conditioned subway cars from St. Louis Car. They will be delivered beginning early next year....Fares have been raised in St. Petersburg (20¢ to 25¢) and in Norfolk (adult fare also upped to a quarter)....A new authority will soon begin operations in Tulsa, taking over from the strike-bound MK&O Transit Lines operation....One more company, Syracuse (New York) Transit must be added to those requiring exact fare only....That express service between both Minneapolis and St. Paul and their airport began August 5....Further efforts are being made in Seattle to retain the city's amputated trolley coach fleet. Now the group fighting to retain the electric vehicles has requested an injunction barring the Seattle Transit System from purchasing those 70 diesel coaches with the HUD grant STS recently received. Earlier, the city council had passed an ordinance requiring the operation of both electric and diesel coaches in the STS fleet.

INTERURBAN

NARROW GAUGE GOING -- An Interstate Commerce Commission examiner has recommended abandonment of 250 miles of Rio Grande's remaining three-foot gauge operation between Alamosa, Colorado and Farmington, New Mexico. The popular Silverton train between Durango and Silverton is not involved. The examiner found that truck service in substitution was adequate for the traffic in the region. His recommendation takes effect on September 16 unless objections are filed with the Commission.

CURRENT CLIPPINGS -- Louisville & Nashville and Monon stockholders have both approved a merger of the latter into the former; application to the Interstate Commerce Commission will be made next month....Alaska state officials are considering a plan whereby the U. S. owned Alaska Railroad will be extended to the Point Barrow oil fields....Chicago Burlington & Quincy has petitioned #11-12, the Nebraska Zephyr, between Galesburg and Lincoln for September 21, but must run #23, Chicago to Minneapolis, Fridays and Sundays until December 31, pending ICC hearings....The Rock Island has been permitted to close its Moline, Illinois station and consolidate it with facilities at Rock Island....The Ogdensburg and Norwood, a former segment of the Rutland in upstate New York has embargoed all operations due to a lack of business; no application for abandonment is known to have been filed as yet....and Canadian Pacific's Canadian was struck by a large boulder unlodged following heavy rains in the mountainous region of British Columbia; it appears even Mother Nature is down on the passenger train.

MISCELLANEOUS MEANDERINGS -- The Missouri Pacific has been ordered to continue running four St. Louis-Kansas City trains again; the previous order was temporary, allowing MP to try various ways of promoting the service....The "unknown" California airline, Pacific Southwest (PSA), which presently operates a fleet consisting of 3 Electras, 2 DC-9s and 8 leased Boeing 727s, is to replace them with 727-200s and 737-200s in the near future....Ecuador's civil aviation board has suspended operations of the National Area airline. The firm is said to owe the Ecuadorian government \$750,000 in taxes and other services on its national and international routes....The Southern Pacific has ordered a \$1 million simulator unit from a subsidiary of McDonnell Douglas corporation. It is to be used to train locomotive engineers and employs motion pictures and a computer to completely simulate train operation....The Interstate Commerce Commission has ordered the Penn Central's acquisition of the New Haven reopened....The latest rock group out of Detroit is known as the MC-5. Any Challengers?

A TC NOTE -- Beginning next week, TC's regular weekly issues will be expanded to four pages, and the monthly magazine version will be discontinued. The features from the former monthly are to be incorporated into the new weekly.
(PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY TRANSPORT CENTRAL, 416 NORTH STATE, CHICAGO ILLINOIS 60610)