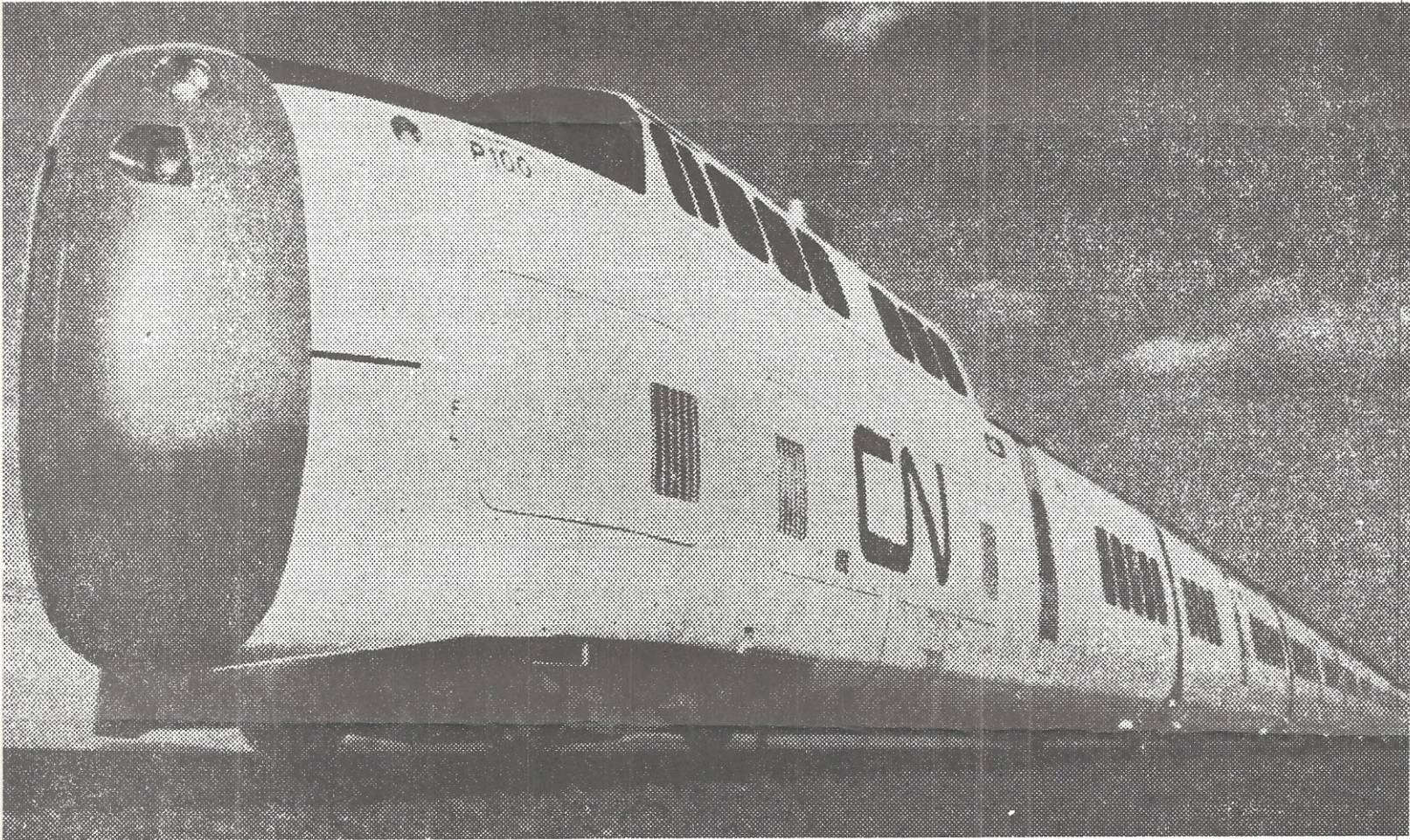


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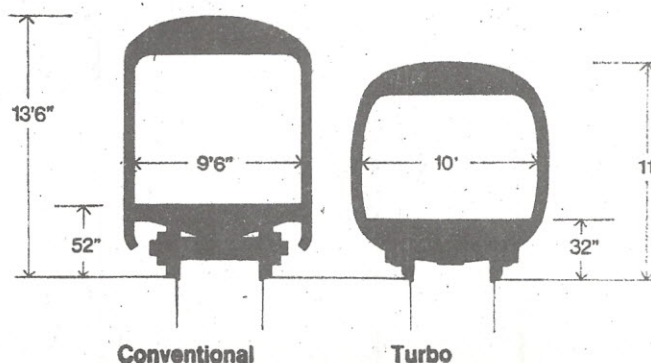


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NEWSFRONT

TURBO TAKEOFF -- The turbos are running! Canadian National yesterday (Thursday) began regular service of the highly-touted TurboTrains between Toronto and Montreal, providing the fastest rail passenger operation on the North American continent. The sleek new trains will travel the 335 miles between Canada's first and second cities nonstop at an average speed of 84 mph, with the entire run taking only three hours and 59 minutes, an hour less than the four-year-old Rapido trains, which use conventional equipment.

The trains are powered by gas turbine engines constructed by United Aircraft of Canada (near Montreal), the same contractor whose U. S. division is preparing similar equipment for New Haven's New York-Boston run. The car interiors have rounded interiors (as in an aircraft cabin), with comfortable, individual reclining leather seats equipped with pullout trays for meal service in TurboClub (or first class) units; comparable amenities are provided TurboLuxe (or second class) passengers, though they must purchase their meals at a snack counter.



TurboClub fare between the two cities (including meals) is \$22.50; TurboLuxe rates (without meals) range between \$10.90 and \$14.50, depending on the day of the week. In speed and price, the new TurboTrains are highly competitive with Air Canada's jet service (the airline, like the railroad, is owned by the Dominion government); AC first class fare between Toronto and Montreal is \$35.50, economy \$25, and the flying time is about 65 minutes. Including limousine connections on each end, downtown-to-downtown travel by air averages out at about three hours.

Normal capacity of a TurboTrain unit is 300 passengers; consist is two TurboClub cars (one with a dome), three TurboLuxe cars, and an additional dome cafe-bar car for coach passengers. Passengers fortunate enough to be seated in the front dome car can look out over the engineer's shoulders at the right-of-way ahead. (There are locomotive units on each end of the train).

CN has leased five seven-car trains from United Aircraft, with an option to buy; UA will also handle the equipment's maintenance. A seven-car TurboTrain, carrying a 300 passenger load, weighs only one-quarter as much as a similar train of conventional equipment. And maintenance costs are

expected to be sharply reduced because turbines and axle sets have been designed so that they can be easily removed and replaced with new sets.

Although the equipment could in theory be operated at much higher speeds—even the Rapido trains regularly hit 95 mph on their runs—the roadbed needs upgrading, and there are yet some 300 grade crossings on the 333-mile line, with their attendant safety hazards. On the day a Turbo was operated for the press over the line, December 10, the east-bound run hit a truck and trailer at Kingston, injuring a railroad employe working on the right of way and providing some spectacular pictures of flying debris that were widely reprinted in that evening's papers.

For the moment, there will be two departures from each city each day, and the railway is highly optimistic about the future of the Turbos (and of passenger service in general on the CN).

THE GOOD... -- If railroads can merge, why not railroad unions? This question has been answered positively by the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, Switchmen's Union of North America and the Order of Railway Conductors and Brakemen, all of which will become the United Transportation Union next January 1. Charles S. Luna, former BRT president who will become chief executive of the 250,000 man amalgamation, announced in a press conference heralding the move that the two main objectives of the new combine would be increased safety and legislative aid for improved urban rail passenger service.

Seaboard Coast Line's winter season Florida Special, New York-Miami, is set to run again effective December 13; its reduced consist, however, does indicate the continuing decline in rail patronage....The White Pass & Yukon, that "up north" narrow gauge line, has purchased 15 unused slim-gauge hopper cars from the East Broad Top Railroad....C&O/B&O has announced that first class rail fares will be discontinued effective January 1; at the same time, purchase of sleeper accommodations will include complimentary meal service, a la CN....The remaining portion of IC's Seminole, Chicago-Carbondale, has been renamed the Shawnee....Milwaukee Road's 15-16, Minneapolis-Aberdeen, must run at least through April 16, 1969, for ICC hearings....And SCL's 51-52, Florence-Augusta, must run through April 9, 1969 for the same reason.

...AND THE BAD -- B&O's SlumberCoach operation on the Chicago-Washington Capitol Limited has been reduced to Thursday-Friday-Saturday only westbound and Friday-Saturday-Sunday only eastbound, with additional service at peak travel times....Southern has again petitioned the Carolina Special (27-28, Oakdale-Columbia), this time for January 6....Northern Pacific dome-sleeper cars will not operate on the South Wind or City of Miami runs this winter; both trains will operate added 11 double bedroom cars, and L&N will even run a Louisville-Miami car....Santa Fe's summer-only Williams Junction-Grand Canyon train most likely will not run again next summer, so we'll list it as a casualty now....Penn Central wants off for two more trains, 67-68, Chicago-Cincinnati (over-night coach) and 302-305, Chicago-Indianapolis, the former for January 5, the latter for January 10.

BRIGANDS, BUSES AND BOATS -- Jesse James would have been proud. Three armed men, borrowing a technique from the almost-legendary highwayman, held up a San Francisco-bound Greyhound bus on I-80 in Iowa Sunday and relieved the 23 startled passengers of \$1500 and assorted valuables. Two men boarded the coach in Des Moines and ordered the driver to stop about 5 miles west of Iowa City, where a third man was waiting in a car. After robbing the passengers, the bandits threw a tear gas grenade into the coach and

tried to shoot flat the rear tires. The latter ploy was unsuccessful, as the vehicle made it to Iowa City, where driver and passengers continued on in another vehicle. The highwaymen are thus far still at large....The majestic Queen Elizabeth has completed her last voyage. The world's largest ocean liner docked Sunday at Fort Lauderdale after thirty years of crossing the high seas. She will there be fitted out as a hotel and convention center, never to roam the bounding main again.

AIRLINE ADDENDA -- Two weeks ago, North Central's last Convair 440 was retired from passenger service at O'Hare; now Delta is the last line to fly piston craft out of the Chicago field. Delta has now announced that it will phase out its last piston craft—also a Convair 440—February 1, and then there will be none....Airlines must now pay a "use tax" on all fuel purchased out-of state and used at O'Hare to refuel planes. In a suit brought by United testing the constitutionality of an Illinois law, the Cook County Circuit Court ruled that a prior "loophole" used by carriers to avoid payment of taxes on such fuels was no longer valid....Homeowners around O'Hare might find the crowded skies a bit quieter from now on, all because of VASI. Visual Slope Approach Indicators are now in use at the busy field, providing for steeper descents—and less noise on landing.... The weather was so foul in Los Angeles last weekend that planes were unable to land at L. A. International for four nights running....Alitalia will provide about \$35,000 in funds for an advertising campaign promoting U. S. travel to foreign tourists. The U. S. Commerce Department will ante up an equal amount for the campaign.

METROPOLITAN REPORT -- The Chicago Transit Authority has settled with its unions on a new contract, which was then ratified by the unions' members. "L" and surface employes who are members of Divisions 241 and 308 of the Amalgamated Union will receive benefits ranging from a 60½ per hour hike spread over three years (making CTA men the highest-paid in the country—until New York's transit workers get a hike next year) through various fringe benefits and working-condition improvements to the institution of an exact fare plan by November 1, 1969. As we go to press, action on a proposed fare hike of 10¢ has been deferred until next Monday; Thursday's board hearing (postponed from last week) on the 1969 budget was a stormy one....The opening date for the Ryan rapid transit extension has now been set for March 1. Although work is progressing on schedule, the city has blamed a delay in acquiring land along the 18th Street route of the temporary connection to the "L" as the principal villain in the postponement; a further cause is the fact that the 150 new cars from Budd intended for the line (and the other new route in the median strip of the John F. Kennedy Expressway) have not at this writing been placed under construction.

TRANSIT TALK -- The South Shore electric commuter line is seeking funds from UMTA or the state of Indiana toward the purchase of 30 new cars; the line's president claims the current roster of 40-year-old units may not be able to last the winter....Chicago suburban carrier United Motor Coach was granted a fare increase on an emergency basis; pleas for the same consideration by Evanston Bus Company were denied, and the matter held for a full hearing....Another Underground extension is on the horizon for London. With the Victoria line virtually complete, the Executive has released plans for the 1972 start of a route linking Baker Street and Trafalgar Square; the first section will cost some 13 million pounds.

MORE OF THE SAME -- SEPTA has revealed details of some 40 transportation projects costing \$270 million in a six-year capital improvements plan.... New additions to the Exact Fare city list are Atlanta, Rochester, Tampa and Beaumont; the list now numbers nineteen.