

Transport Central

NEWSFRONT

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NO QUESTIONS ASKED -- Norfolk & Western may have found an approach to successful train-off petitions (TC 02 May 69) as the ICC has decided to allow the railroad to discontinue 15/25-26/16, the Powhatan Arrow, Norfolk-Cincinnati following the runs of May 23....Likewise, Northern Pacific found that by running trains until nobody cared whether they operated or not, it was easy to receive ICC blessings to drop them. Hence, NP will drop RDC runs 13/124-123/14, Fargo-Pembina, and 57-58, Duluth-Staples on May 25. The same carrier is planning to repetition the plush Mainstreeter when the one year ICC waiting period is up because, according to their latest report, (the train) "is the cause of 50% of our annual passenger losses"...Meanwhile, Southern Pacific will repetition the City of San Francisco, 101-102, Ogden-San Francisco, effective July 17, claiming that 1968's \$1.3 million loss was higher than ever....Southern has formally petitioned the Pelican, 41-42, Chattanooga-York (Ala.) for June 12, having previously cut off the Bristol-Chattanooga and York-New Orleans portions to set it up.

FLYING HIGH -- Russia's Tu-144 has surfaced (or is it landed?) again. Long suspected to have sustained serious damage in an unreported crash, the SST turned up fit and flying at Moscow Thursday. USSR officials announced that regular production of the 1,550 mph jet had already begun, but declined to say how many craft would be built or when regular Tu-144 service would begin; there is speculation that the new planes will be in operation on the Moscow-Khabarovsk run later this year. Private Russian sources said that the test Tu-144 was the only prototype assembled thus far, and that it had flown successfully seven times. The plane's only SST competition, the Anglo-French Concorde, will not be operational until 1973; thus far the Tu-144 has generated interest from Holland and Pakistan. No cost figures have been released, though the ship is to be ready for export in less than two years.

AIRLINE ADDENDA -- A CAB examiner's ruling that reduced air fares for the 12-21 age group are discriminatory and should be eliminated has drawn angry replies from the nation's teens. An unprecedented deluge of mail, the largest ever to hit the CAB, has descended on the board, which must soon affirm or reject its examiner's ruling....Chicago Helicopter Airways will resume O'Hare-Meigs-Midway triangular service May 29, with 4 round trips between O'Hare and Midway and three each on the other two legs. A fare of \$10 has been set for any single trip, up from the \$6 the carrier was charging when service was suspended in 1965. Initial runs will be serviced by 12-passenger Sikorsky or 4-passenger Bell helicopters.

JET JOTTINGS -- Now Continental has petitioned a Federal Circuit Court in Washington for a stay of the transpacific route awards to TWA and to Northwest Orient. The airline, which has already filed suit against the CAB because it was left out of the lucrative awards, contends that the new rights should be delayed until the CAB has ruled on requests by Continental and several other carriers for East Coast/Midwest-South Pacific authority. President Nixon, raising hints of "cronyism" on the part of former President Johnson, voided the latter's award of a West Coast-South Pacific route to Continental.

LONG HAULS -- Braniff will inaugurate daily service between Chicago and Panama City on June 2. The flights will connect at Houston for direct service to the Canal Zone....Northeast has now petitioned the CAB for authority to raise fares July 1. The Storer Broadcasting-owned carrier has asked for hikes in special fares, and for a surcharge on the more heavily-used flights in its North-South services. The line would also boost youth and military fares....Air Canada's strike is over, and the line is flying again. 6,330 machinists ratified a 26-month pact to halt the month-long walkout earlier this week....Seaboard World Airlines begins direct cargo service to Europe from Chicago's O'Hare International Airport July 8, with six weekly midnight trips using DC-63F freighters to London, Frankfurt, Zurich and Paris via Philadelphia.

ODDMENTS -- Pan Am has disclosed details of a new bus system that is to begin ferrying passengers between outlying areas in the suburbs and John F. Kennedy International Airport. Under an agreement with Greyhound subsidiary Carey Transportation, the airline will use 18 buses between JFK and Greenwich, Conn.; Carle Place, L. I.; White Plains; Brooklyn and La Guardia airport. Fares will range from \$1.35 to \$7.50, and all equipment will be radio-equipped. Initially, the service will be restricted to passengers bound to or from Pan Am flights only....Two British peers have approached Cunard with an offer of over \$7 million for the Queen Elizabeth, now on display as a tourist attraction at Fort Lauderdale. The "gracious lady of the sea" would be taken from retirement and placed in excursion service between London and Australia....If it matters, TC has just received word that O'Hare airport has its own telephone directory, has had since 1961, and is the only airport so honored. Only companies and offices are listed, no names, for the 28,000 phones there.

DOT DOLES -- To Syracuse, New York, the first element in a program to develop improved command and control communications in urban transport. The project will consider applying to the city's transportation system advanced means on communicating with and controlling vehicles....To Northeastern University to help finance a two-week seminar for transit "middle managers" (medium-level executives)....To the Urban League of Hartford to seek solutions to the problem of bringing inner-city ghetto residents to suburban jobs via public transportation....To Abilene, Texas, to upgrade its bus system and construct a new garage facility.

METROPOLITAN REPORT -- National City Lines and T.I.M.E.-DC, Inc., a trucking firm, are discussing a merger. The freight hauler is already 50% owned by NCL....The Illinois House has passed a bill permitting the CTA to purchase other suburban bus lines—if it can raise the funds....Automobiles have been shown to be the chief cause of air pollution in Chicago, the city's air pollution control department director said....Seven candidates, most of them black, have been nominated for the post of president of Amalgamated local 241, representing CTA drivers. A series of wildcat walkouts over the lack of black representation within the union led to its being placed in trusteeship last year....The historic Angel's Flight Railway incline in Los Angeles closes down this week "for a few years". The line will supposedly be rebuilt when urban renewal in the area is completed....Those who feel the disappearance of the trolley coach to be a detriment to the transit industry might be heartened to know that there are yet over 1,000 still operating on the 18 U.S. and Canadian properties currently utilizing the vehicle. At the peak of popularity of the hybrid in the early 1950's, some 50-odd carriers operated almost 10,000....A new firm, Short Line, Inc., has taken over the former Joliet-Aurora Transit Lines route between those two cities. JATL now operates service between Algin and Aurora,