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column one

Last week, when we spoke in this space of Ford's plan to create a "new town" in Dearborn, we wondered aloud editorially whether or not Detroit had a transit plan that took into account the effects such a project would have on the entire metropolitan area with respect to mobility; if superimposing yet another traffic generator on an already-overcrowded and inadequate movement network was justified.

Lest readers think they note a hint of vindictiveness aimed at the Motor City, we hasten to point out that, apart from the logical example due to the timeliness of the news item, there was no attempt to single out Detroit as being the sole victim of poor urban planning.

Far from it. The symptoms of urban decay and lack of foresight exemplified here are quite common all across the land. The particular villain of the piece is the common lack of muscle evidenced by local transportation agencies when faced with a particularly fatuous bit of "planning" that threatens to compound an already-wretched pattern of urban mobility.

The Detroit example of "piecemeal planning" is but one of many. Right here in Chicago, for example, the Transit Authority timidly acquiesced when asked if it thought it might be a good idea if Sears were to construct a super-tall corporate headquarters building on the southwest corner of the Loop. Forgetting the fact that surface and rapid transit lines are already overburdened during the critical hours in that area (as well as elsewhere in the Loop), and that the new structure will be completed and occupied long before any relief comes in the form of the new Loop subway and collector-distributor rapid transit system, the official policy of the Authority was to go along with the project on the theory that the new traffic generated could somehow be handled by a slight "beefing up" of existing services.

This argument is specious for several reasons. Chicago is one of the few cities left in the U.S. where public transportation carries far and away the bulk of the daytime population to and from the CBD, better than two-thirds, as a matter of fact. With an evening peak as busy as it is at present (one could practically walk on the tops of buses in an unbroken movement between Wacker and Van Buren along State Street at 5:00 PM, for example) it is difficult to see just how any substantial increase in traffic could be accommodated.

Since the overcrowding on public transit vehicles is already at a peak, it is easy to see how any additional superimposed load might tend to drive potential patrons toward their cars, where they at least might be comfortable while waiting.

The point here is obvious: Transit agencies must participate in the planning process for new urban construction, and must have veto power on a par with zoning agencies (which themselves in theory should take such matters into consideration) if such construction would tend to make their own job more difficult. Getting about an urban area is an onerous enough task without adding still more hurdles.

--RICHARD R. KUNZ

**metro memo**CLOUT

Let the press release from UMTA tell the story:

"The Indiana University Institute for Urban Transportation recently distributed to the Urban Mass Transportation Administration mailing list a publication entitled MASS TRANSIT MANAGEMENT: A HANDBOOK FOR SMALL CITIES.

"While UMTA participated in the cost of preparing this Handbook, through a matching grant to Indiana University under the UMTA demonstration program, responsibility for the contents of the Handbook rests solely with the project sponsor, and UMTA takes issue with some of the statements contained therein.

"In particular, UMTA does not agree with the advice, given in Chapter 3, that small cities should use political means to influence or hasten UMTA decisions on grant applications. UMTA welcomes the views of Members of Congress and other elected officials on matters pending before the Administration. Communications from such persons, representing their respective constituencies, are entirely appropriate. Such communications do not, however, give an applicant any preferential status.

"Since the beginning of its programs in 1961, UMTA has recognized the urgency of transit problems in small communities and has worked closely with local interests in their efforts to solve those problems. This policy remains in effect. Under present criteria, applications for capital grants from public agencies in standard metropolitan areas of 250,000 and under are accorded the highest priority for current funds.

"While I understand Indiana University is preparing a supplement to the Handbook correcting this and other factual errors, I did want to take this opportunity to bring the matter to your attention."

(Signed) WILLIAM S. ALLISON
Deputy Administrator

[EDITOR'S NOTE: While we do not ordinarily "review" such reports, largely because of their limited interest to our readership, a few comments are in order. First, the Handbook is by and large an excellent one, chock-full of much data of interest to the small transit operator. I was particularly impressed with the refreshing candor of the Handbook in pointing out that having a "friend in Congress" was of particular value in speeding an application through the bureaucratic maze; I thought it was about time the truth be told. Nevertheless, in spite of what Mr. Allison says above, I would be interested in knowing just how, if it is true that small cities get consideration at the top of the heap that the huge CTA/Chicago Loop subway project was funded so quickly after it became known that the funds were available, and why the amount applied for (\$400,000,000-plus) was sufficient to completely exhaust the total budgeted by UMTA for the entire state of Illinois, despite the fact that other cities in the Prairie State have equally urgent projects demanding Federal funding. In fact, many Downstate agencies have complained that they were not even informed of the existence of the funds before the "sugar" was given to Chicago. But then, one must admit that the Illinois Congressional delegation does indeed have a small bit of "clout"].

AT THE HUB

Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe, himself a former tenant of the Massachusetts statehouse, and the present Governor, Francis W. Sargent, have jointly announced that DOT has approved a \$3,500,000 grant to resolve the transportation problems of the Boston metropolitan area.

The study, which will extend over 18 months, was first proposed by Governor Sargent's Transportation Task Force in February 1970 in response to Secretary Volpe's call for new directions and initiatives in transportation planning. Secretary Volpe's concern was reflected in the creation of an Office of Environment and Urban Systems as his first official act as Secretary to resolve the transportation impasse that had been occurring in major metropolitan areas of the U.S.

"The proposed study is one of the most comprehensive ever submitted to the Department of Transportation," Secretary Volpe said. "All forms of transportation and their relation to community development will be considered by the study. Today's urban society must be served by transportation which satisfies social, political and environmental needs as well as purely transportation goals and objectives.

"President Nixon and I are committed to encouraging decision-making at the local and state levels, which this study represents. We believe that the Boston region's development program will serve as an excellent example of how those who are affected by serious transportation problems can and should be involved in making the basic choices regarding their communities.

"I believe this study to be of national importance particularly as our nation moves to create new transportation programs for metropolitan areas now demanding innovation and change in transportation practice. The Governor and citizens of Massachusetts are to be commended for their imaginative and creative approach to the solution of these very pressing problems. It is not a study for study's sake but a commitment to get the facts that lead to positive action.

The Secretary indicated that the study will insure that the transportation planning process will be used as a positive tool for improving the quality of life in the metropolitan Boston area.

"Protecting the environment is not merely the preservation of parks and open spaces", the Secretary said. "It basically concerns the manner in which we live and the role that transportation fulfills in achieving our common goals."

The Secretary stated that the Nixon Administration has full confidence in the capacity of citizens to make decisions with responsible leadership that are compatible with their goals and assumptions. "This study is illustrative of what revenue sharing might accomplish. I believe this program will serve as an important step toward equitable, compatible and balanced transportation in the Boston area. Hopefully, it will become a model for all of urban America."

The study will consider a number of major transportation controversies in the Boston area. These will be reviewed in concert, with careful attention to their interrelationships and to their effect upon the full range of metropolitan values, such as environment, housing, employment and the economy.

The 18-month study will focus on the proposed construction of a number of new lim-

ited-access expressways and rapid transit extensions of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. In particular, the study will review the Inner Belt (I-695), the Southwest Expressway (I-95 South), the Southwest Rapid Transit Extension, the route 2 extension from Alewife to the Inner Belt, the Harvard-Alewife transit extension, and relocated I-95, including the Third Harbor Tunnel. Governor Sargent has indicated that a decision on Boston's Southwest Expressway will be made within twelve months.

URBAN POTPOURRI

¶Illinois State Treasurer Alan J. Dixon and Governor Ogilvie have expressed reservations about a proposal to have the state buy \$4,500,000 in outstanding CTA bonds (TC 01 MAR 71). The objective of the Republican-sponsored proposal is to allow the Chicago Transit Authority to avoid setting aside several million dollars annually for reserve for interest and retirement of outstanding bonds.

¶Money for more new subway cars will be added to New York's proposed capital budget, Lindsay administration officials have been advised by members of the City Council, alarmed by complaints of deteriorating service. The Transit Authority asked for money for 520 new air-conditioned cars, while the City Planning Commission (which drafts the capital budgets) cut that request to 250. The Mayor, who modifies the planners' budget before making public the document that the Board of Estimate and City Council vote on, further cut the total to 200 cars, at an outlay of \$47,000,000. It is this figure that will be revised upward.

¶Other new equipment: As these words are written (March 12) the new IC prototype car, which would "positively and definitely" be in Chicago by March 1, has not arrived on the property as yet. Front page pictures, one in color, were splashed across the front pages of Chicago newspapers a few days ago, but in small type the captions noted that the car (#1502, the second prototype) had been photographed at the GSI plant in St. Louis. Don't hang by your thumbs....Peoria, now the home of a transit district, will get its 33 new buses on April 3. Extensive rearrangements of service, including some extensive expansion, have already become effective against the day when the new coaches will begin operating.

¶Zigzagging: Some months ago, the then-president of South Suburban Safeway Lines (Harvey, Illinois), Robert Thompson, surprised observers by offering to sell the carrier to the Chicago Transit Authority. Shortly afterward, a notice was posted in the employe area contradicting the earlier pronouncement (even though the letter of intent had been seen by myriad reporters), and shortly after that, Thompson himself was eased out of management for "personal reasons". Now, in an appearance before the Chicago South Suburban Mass Transit District (the body that arranged for the IC's still-undelivered new cars) pleading for assistance to buy 75 new buses (among other things), SSS vice-president Harold Poslusny (a former Illinois Commerce Commission official) reiterated the company's offer to sell, but restricted it to the local rights the firm holds in Chicago. If that proposal were to be taken as such, it would be totally meaningless, and would involve the sale to the CTA of authority it in effect already has. The CTA can presently operate on any Chicago street (with certain City Council consents necessary in some cases) and would hardly be prudent in purchasing any such authority. Were South Suburban to be indeed tired of its obligations to provide local service in those areas (the bulk of which are now directly paralleled by CTA routes), it need only petition for abandonment of such authority, which presumably would easily be granted; in any event, CTA could begin service "on top" of SSS at any time.

¶The Metropolitan Transit Authority of Baltimore recently instituted an expanded downtown shuttle bus route. Despite the use of newer buses, more frequent schedules and a longer route, the fare remains at the same 10¢ charged for the predecessor shuttle bus service. Operating at eight-minute intervals, the new Downtowner (route 70) service is a joint project of MTA and the Committee for Downtown, Inc. The brilliant yellow, red and black buses will run on a route linking major business, financial and shopping districts from 9:00 AM to 5:30 PM on a Monday-through-Friday schedule.

¶The British government has ordered two prototype battery-powered electric buses from Crompton Leyland Electricars Ltd., a subsidiary of British Leyland Motor Corporation and the Hawker-Siddeley group. By lending the two buses to municipal operators free of charge, the government hopes to stimulate the use of battery-powered buses in city centers. Designed to carry 18 standing passengers and 8 seated, the buses will be approximately 21 feet long and weigh close to 20,000 lbs. They will have a range of 30 miles in center traffic conditions, with a top speed of about 20 miles per hour, and are due to be delivered after June 1971.

¶Noise notes (from a survey in the technical journal *SOUND AND VIBRATION*):

- ✓ *The noise in a moving subway car jammed with passengers is about half as loud as in the same car when it is empty, because passengers absorb some of the sound.*
- ✓ *Tight turns on the IRT Flushing line can produce screeching noises from rubbing of the wheels against rails louder than that of an automobile horn at three feet.*
- ✓ *When a train leaves a tunnel and travels above ground, the noise level in the cars drops about 30 per cent.*
- ✓ *The IND subway, because of its trackbed, is noisier than either the IRT or the BMT.*
- ✓ *Noise is less at the center of a car than in a seat position over the wheels of the car.*

The study, conducted by Professor Cyril M. Harris, a recognized acoustical expert from Columbia University, gave high marks to Montreal, whose rubber-tired subway was found to be about half as loud as the IND. PATH cars, largely because they are all sealed and air-conditioned, were next best and "significantly lower" in noise than New York City subway cars.

¶The Illinois Commerce Commission has authorized Bloomington-Normal City Lines to abandon all operations on sixty-days notice for the usual financial reasons. The line, whose thirteen buses have been operating at a loss since 1969, was a former National City Lines subsidiary, but was sold a few years ago to the late Vernon Westover (along with several other properties, all but one of which have been either municipalized or otherwise sold off), a former NCL regional official. A transit district is in the works for the two cities, however.... Since the Southern California Rapid Transit District inaugurated its Exact Fare program some 17 months ago, it has received nearly \$100,000 in "free" revenue from its riders. As is the case with most Exact Fare properties, refund coupons for passengers without the correct change are available, but are not often turned in.

railway report

RAILROAD CRISIS-AS-USUAL

From an editorial in the *CHICAGO DAILY NEWS*:

"A Federal court ruling in Washington has again staved off a partial railroad strike. The ruling upset the plan of the United Transportation Union to shut down the Burlington Northern and the Seaboard Coast Line while allowing business as usual on the other lines.

"One judge had already declared such a selective strike legal. The Washington judge, however, ruled that a "whipsaw strike" would violate the Railway Labor Act and the question will have to be settled on appeal. Meanwhile, the UTU is apparently legally free to shut down all the railroads any time it chooses, since Congress allowed the temporary law forbidding a strike to expire March 1.

"No doubt Congress will step in again if a national strike is called. Yet it has permitted the impasse to move from one crisis to another while the means were at hand to establish fair and firm rules for peace in the transportation industry.

"The failure of Congress to act on the Nixon administration plan to uphold the old and ineffectual Railway Labor Act virtually guarantees a continuing series of railroad crises. One after another, the railroad unions raise the strike threat, and there is no reason to expect a change until the law is modified to substitute arbitration for the strike and lockout tactics that can no longer be tolerated in the industry.

"The present crisis has narrowed down to one holdout union, three others having agreed to settlement along the lines recommended by a presidential emergency board last November. And the sole remaining issue is that of work rules--the same old "featherbed" that has blocked railroad efficiency for years. The wage recommendation--a whopping 43.6 per cent increase over 3½ years--is acceptable to the UTU, but nothing is about to budge its grip on rules that lost their meaning with the passing of the steam train.

"Nothing, that is, unless Congress acts. It should act, and before a new strike call forces it to put a new patch on a situation that is beyond patching."

THE DEADLINE APPROACHETH...

Railpax is getting nearer. The entire passenger service department of the Gulf Mobile & Ohio has been fired as of April 30....The North Western is beginning a survey of riders at Kenosha, Racine and Milwaukee to determine the regularity of their patronage. If it can be proven that a majority do not ride on a regular basis, the railroad can claim that its passenger service north of Kenosha (the end of the Chicago North Line commuter zone) is not commuter in nature, but intercity, and hence can be abandoned forthwith under the terms of the Railpax legislation. One sop to riders and the Commission will be an extensive upgrading of the North Line service between Chicago and Kenosha, as "repayment" for dropping the service to Milwaukee; C&NW apparently wants no part of Chicago-Milwaukee passenger runs under Railpax, preferring to shift that burden to the Milwaukee Road if it can.

 **airline action**RATES AND ROUTES

A Civil Aeronautics Board examiner has recommended that Trans World Airlines be allowed to operate non-stop shuttle service between Chicago and Baltimore. Examiner Robert M. Johnson recommended removal of the current certificate restriction which requires TWA's flights between Chicago and Baltimore to start or end at Kansas City or points west.

TWA and United currently operate 17 non-stop flights a day between Chicago and Baltimore. The requirement that TWA flights start at or continue beyond Kansas City prevents that airline from providing the full volume of service required, Johnson said in a brief filed with the full Board in Washington.

The CAB has granted United Air Lines several small fare increases which it refused to approve a month ago. The Board said that United has shown that it operated at a loss in seven of the markets involved last year, and made only a small profit in the other two (Chicago-Columbus and Columbus-Washington).

These poor results occurred despite generally-large loads and the losses appeared due largely to unusual costs stemming from airport and airway congestion, the CAB noted. The fare increases range between 92¢ and \$1.85, and will yield about a million dollars in added revenue. The routes involved (in addition to the two listed above) are Chicago to Dayton, Cedar Rapids, South Bend, Grand Rapids, Lansing, Muskegon and Saginaw.

EQUIPMENT REGISTER

The government of the United Kingdom has offered Lockheed Aircraft Corporation a 50-50 partnership in completing and producing the Rolls-Royce RB-211 engine for the Lockheed TriStar airbus. Rolls-Royce declared bankruptcy a few weeks ago, but the British government will continue work on the engines on a week-to-week basis as long as an agreement seems possible.

Maverick Pacific Southwest Airlines says an engine modification designed to eliminate fuel dumping after takeoff is an apparent success. The process involves a plug installed in the pump drain on engines. The plug redistributes the excess fuel so that it drains right into the combustion chambers. The modification is designed so that excess fuel is burned during landing.

United will modify 65 per cent of its Boeing 727 and 737 aircraft so that they will leave virtually no exhaust trails; the modifications will be completed by the end of this year. Much headway has already been made in retrofitting JT8D engines--used on the 727s and 737s--with improved combustion chambers that reduce smoke emission.

World Airways said it has purchased three new Super DC-8 Super 63 aircraft, the latest of the stretched DC-8 series, for a total of \$40,000,000. The addition of the three jets will give the charter carrier a fleet able to accommodate groups of 40 and up to 250. The three new planes are convertible, designed to accommodate passengers or cargo, and will be delivered in the next few months.