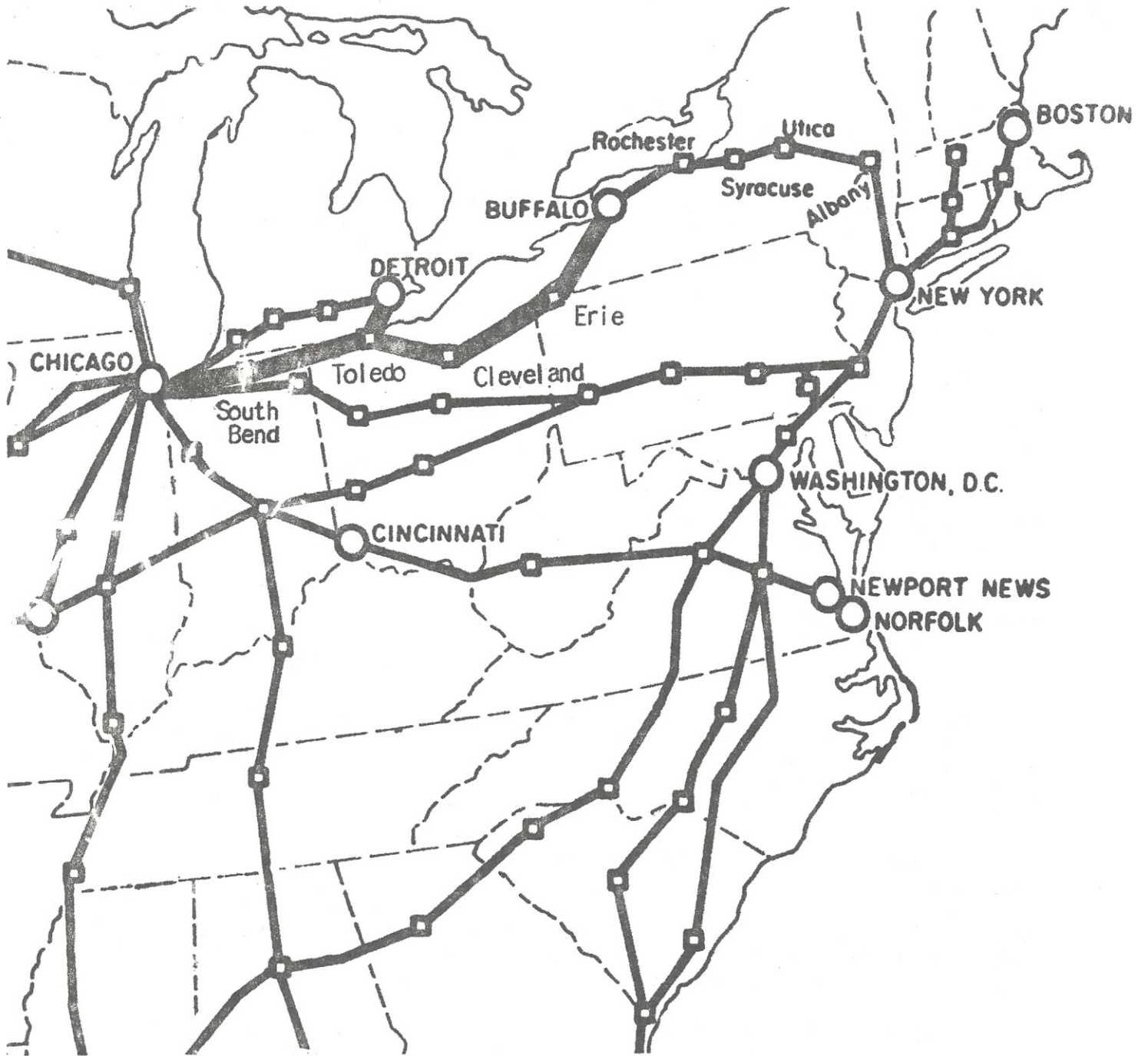


Transport Central



THE LAKE SHORE LIMITED RETURNS

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column one

One of the more significant failures of modern urban mass transit has been its inability to get many people to and from work daily, especially if they toil in the suburbs and live in the city. If they happen to live in inner city ghettos, the lack of mobility resulting from conventional transit's orientation toward the city's core has serious social ramifications as well, for without auto transportation to suburban jobs a great many inner-city residents simply cannot get to work at all, and jobs go begging while welfare rolls climb.

The recently-published Chicago Urban League study documenting this social problem (TC 26 APR 71), while naturally oriented toward conditions extant in the Windy City, still is equally applicable in most of the nation's major cities. A strong case could be made that this lack of mobility for those who need it the most is probably the most serious failing of an industry noted for many shortcomings, and one which will have long-range effects on urban society in general.

But can we lay the entire problem at transit's doorstep? Many carriers, to be sure, have ignored the situation and continued the old tradition of pretending the suburbs do not exist and that the Central Business District is the only attraction for employment and commerce in the metropolitan area. But others, some spurred by UMTA and local civic groups, have attempted to provide at least a small measure of service to suburban job centers where it is even marginally feasible from an economic standpoint; the CTA #40 O'HARE EXPRESS referred to by the Urban League study is one case in point.

Such measures, however, are really only token efforts to alleviate the problem; a massive effort must be undertaken to provide the kind of transportation network that enables easy access from home to job--even if "home" is a crowded tenement on the South Side, and the job exists in Arlington Heights or Wheaton.

The responsibility for assuring such access falls equally upon three sets of shoulders--transit, business and government. The urban carriers, public and private, must exercise more initiative in abandoning the old "traditional" concepts of route structures to take full advantage of the flexibility of transit equipment they themselves insisted upon acquiring because of that flexibility.

Business must recognize its responsibility to provide employment for all capable workers by assuming their social obligation to insure access to their factories, stores and offices through support--and even subsidization if necessary--of mass transit as being the only vehicle capable of doing a complete job. Large parking lots surrounding huge industrial complexes are only part of the answer; an automobile should not have to be an automatic job prerequisite.

And government, federal, state and local, must act as catalyst in getting business and transit together. It is one thing to eagerly lap up massive sums in federal aid for CBD-oriented rapid transit projects; it is quite another to not push as vigorously for the kind of enlightened transportation planning and action that would far more effectively benefit an entire metropolitan area. It will not be too long before the problem gets too big to ignore.

 railway report

"PUT UP OR SHUT UP"

¶ The first of the "supplementary" intercity trains that Amtrak has agreed to operate went into service a scant nine days after the basic NRPC network began. Rectifying what many Ohioans felt a serious sin of omission, Cleveland (and Toledo) once again were linked with the rest of the U.S. by rail as a reconstituted Lake Shore service from Chicago to New York via Cleveland and Buffalo started daily operation.

For some reason (probably an equipment shortage), the first run left Gotham on Monday evening, May 10; the equivalent eastbound run did not depart Chicago Union Station until Tuesday afternoon. Despite the lack of many stops formerly made by the Penn (nee New York) Central runs it is the lineal descendant of, the new run is quite leisurely, and needs more time for the trip than its storied predecessors (including the 20TH CENTURY LIMITED).

The westbound run leaves New York at 8:30 PM each day (on the time of an Amtrak "Empire Service" train to Albany, which it replaces), and reaches Chicago at 2:25 PM the following day. Eastbound, the new service is an entirely new train, stopping at South Bend, Toledo, Cleveland, Erie, Buffalo, Syracuse, Rensselaer, Poughkeepsie, Croton-Harmon and New York. For some inexplicable reason, the stops do not include Rochester, a far larger city than Syracuse.

Amtrak, of course, will fund a portion of the costs of the new runs; the four states of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana will ante up the larger share by virtue of the "put up or shut up" provisions of the Act. Under an agreement with Amtrak, the governors of the affected states and party leaders in the respective legislatures have promised their support in getting the necessary legislation passed guaranteeing the local share. This set of promises was sufficient for Amtrak to institute the service (one reader avers that the Corporation must be making up the rules as it goes along), but the Corporation has stated that it will not hesitate to drop the runs if the money is not forthcoming in 6 months.

Michigan also figures into the proceedings as the fifth state by promising to underwrite a Detroit-Toledo run to connect with the Lake Shore service. This new run, however, cannot begin until June 1 because it will operate over Penn Central tracks between the two cities; these rails have not seen a passenger train in many months and "certain facilities must be arranged for" before the connection can be made. At the same time, plans have been proposed to reinstitute the Detroit-Buffalo via Canada service dropped with the coming of Amtrak.

¶ Although the Lake Shore service is the only supplementary operation (save for the New Haven-Springfield shuttle paid for by Connecticut; that service began with Amtrak May 1) to come to fruition thus far, at least two other links are in the process of being forged, according to reliable reports. One is a Boston-Albany service to be paid for by Massachusetts and New York, and the other is a resumption of the D&H LAURENTIAN between Albany and Montreal; the bill for the latter would be assumed by the state of New York.

¶ Thus the basic network grows, albeit slowly, due to public pressure. At the same time, the Senate has passed a resolution calling for a study aimed at further Amtrak expansion, by directing NRPC to report on possible extensions June 30.

AN "OPEN LETTER" TO AMTRAK

Dear Mr. Kendall (*David Kendall, Amtrak Chairman*):

AMTRAK has been in existence for less than a fortnight, but already it has built up ill will among passengers unprecedented since the days of William H. Vanderbilt. I submit this is due to the summary treatment given passengers destined to or from large cities along the route.

The snubbing of Cleveland and Toledo for unconvincing reasons, the elimination of the PANAMA LIMITED, the rerouting of the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR to eliminate the scenic portions of the route, the inaccurate and unobtainable timetable--all these made the advent of AMTRAK as welcome to the traveling public as the arrival of the bubonic plague.

My latest experience bears me out. Since May 1, I have been planning to attend my brother's graduation in Rochester, N.Y. News appeared in the papers that the Chicago-Buffalo-New York route was being restored. My family and I decided to go by train due to the existence of a low family fare which we had to dig out of Penn Central personnel, there being no advertisement of such fares.

We could not obtain the schedule of the train from Penn Central agents until three days before departure. Then we were informed--not by the Penn Central agents here in Chicago, but by the agent in Rochester through inquiries by my family--that the train will not stop at Rochester. After holding up the state of New York for a whopping \$700,000, your people have the collective chutzpah to bypass the third largest city in the state in favor of the smaller cities of Syracuse and Albany.

I am not aware of the exact costs of stopping a train, but I am told that merely one ticket from Chicago to Rochester would more than cover these costs. I see no reason why this could not be made at least a flag stop, unless (as I suspect), the whole purpose of AMTRAK is to dry up the passenger trade completely by 1973 and leave us at the tender mercies of the airlines.

The ironic situation is that there is presently a slow order in effect at the curve for the Rochester station, so that trains have to slow down in the first place. Enough, I guess, for us to wave at our friends and families while we are carried sixty miles past our destination. The fact that Rochester is one of the points designated on the "basic system" apparently is of no avail to the Rochesterian who wants to travel west of Buffalo.

In a way, I suppose we don't have it too bad. I have a loving family who is willing to drive the 150-mile round trip to Buffalo to pick us up in the wee hours of the morning. The guy I feel sorry for is the fellow traveling from Los Angeles to St. Louis, who arrives on the SUPER CHIEF in Kansas City only to find that the only train for the east has departed ten minutes ago, and that he has to wait another 23 hours and 50 minutes for his connection.

I intend to let my Congressmen and state officials know that we want no more of our tax money appropriated to AMTRAK until you people get your own house in order.

--WILLIAM E. THOMS

(*Bill Thoms is an assistant professor of law at Chicago-Kent College of Law--ED*)

AMTRAK ADDENDA

[Providing a counterpoint to TC's coverage of the creation of AMTRAK is this letter from regular reader E. Everett Edwards--ED]

To the Editor:

Your coverage of the transition to AMTRAK seems a little sparse; scarcely a mention of the legal maneuverings attempting to delay the start of the system or of the last runs of the discontinued trains. I hear N&W ran a 20-car steam POCAHONTAS with 759 on the last day.

Locally, GTW had an 8-car MOHAWK out of Detroit (instead of 3), with three cars of GTW employes riding to Battle Creek and returning in the opposite number (1½ hours late). The last C&O train into Detroit had two cars and 3 passengers, and arrived 12:05 PM Saturday (May 1) from Huntington, W.Va. (due 10:59 AM).

Half an hour later, two diesels and six coaches pulled out for Toledo and points unknown on a funeral train to deliver all coaches to AMTRAK. Already, Fort Street Union Station doorways are boarded up, leaving C&O business car #3 and privately-owned Santa Fe observation 33 Candyland on the station tracks. The last train to New York had one express car, one TrailVan, one coach, one Pullman and one caboose.

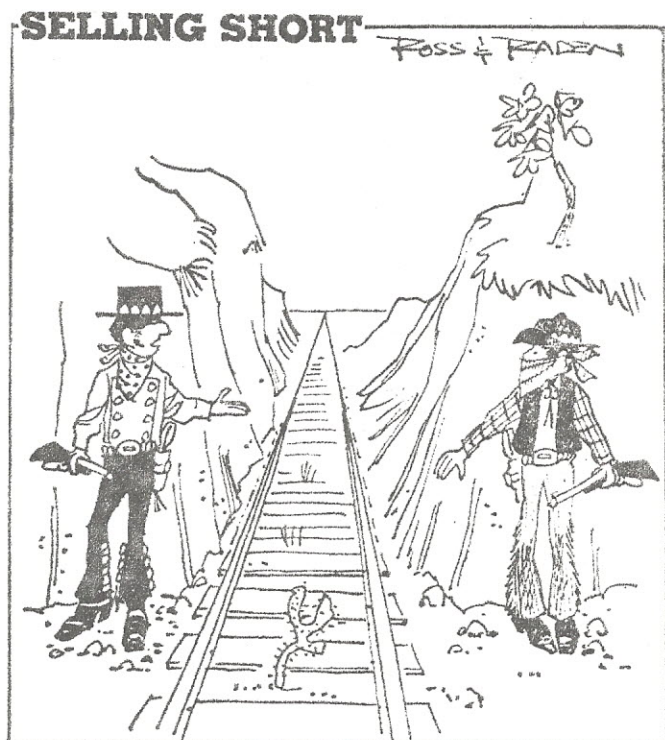
--E. EVERETT EDWARDS

¶ Half-rate pass privileges have been announced for railroad employes and retirees by NRPC. AMTRAK president David W. Kendall said the pass privileges will be available thusly:

√Half rate orders will be issued to employes of AMTRAK-participating rail carriers who have one or more years of service and to dependent members of their immediate families "on request of a designated officer of the employe's railroad." These orders can be used to buy half-rate tickets before boarding trains and will be good "over all lines of AMTRAK operation." Roomettes or other such extra accomodations will be subject to the full rate.

√Half-rate orders will be available in the same manner to retired employes from the designated officer of the AMTRAK-participating road the employe previously worked for.

√AMTRAK will also "consider" such pass requests from active or retired employes of terminals and other rail



"We been here for three days, Jesse. Lemme take another look at that Amtrak timetable."

subsidiaries "on the basis of their involvement in AMTRAK train operations. This will apply, as well, to dependent members of the immediate families of such employees or retirees.

√AMTRAK "will reserve the right to suspend the use of half-rate privileges on certain trains or during periods of heavy travel.

√The half-rate orders will be valid over the entire AMTRAK network and thus the pass privileges will in many cases be of wider scope than heretofore.

The new pass policy, however, will not apply to those railroads which chose to stay out of AMTRAK--the Southern, the Rio Grande and the Rock Island. Employees and retirees on the three lines will retain whatever pass privileges they now have, confined to use on those roads.

¶ The Burlington has been permitted to drop two non-AMTRAK trains it had been required by court order to continue operating between Chicago and West Quincy, Ill. after May 1. In vacating a temporary restraining order permitting the road to drop the runs after May 10, U.S. District Judge Bernard M. Decker let the complaint (by the cities of Quincy and Macomb and two colleges) stand, but said the continuation of the suit had little chance of success. He said he would seek the advice of Chief Judge Edwin A. Robson of the court as to whether a three-judge panel should be named to discuss the constitutionality question.

ROAD/RAIL RETURNS

¶ The Auto-Train Corporation of Florida has been authorized by the Interstate Commerce Commission to operate a rail passenger and auto transport service between Alexandria, Va. (a Washington suburb) and Sanford, Florida. The service will use specially-designed trains over existing lines of the Richmond, Fredericksburg & Potomac and Seaboard Coast Line. The autos will be carried in enclosed cars and the individuals in passenger cars. Company plans for a stock flotation to raise funds for the project were also authorized by the Commission.

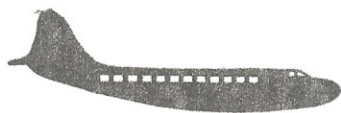
CANADIAN COMMENT

¶ Passenger fare increases averaging 11 per cent have been announced by CP Rail, pending approval by the Canadian Transport Commission. The new rates, scheduled to go into effect June 1, would bring the one-way coach fare from Toronto to Winnipeg to \$37 from \$33, and the one-way roomette fare from Toronto to Vancouver to \$112 from \$110 without meals and from \$125 to \$138 with meals.

Commuter services in the Montreal area are excluded from the increase, as are trains linking Toronto and Windsor, Toronto and Havelock, Calgary and Edmonton, Calgary and Lethbridge, and Lethbridge and Medicine Hat. The rates would apply to trains operating from Montreal and Toronto to Vancouver; Montreal to Saint John; Victoria to Courtenay, B.C.; and Halifax to Yarmouth, N.S.

RAIL/BUS NOTES

¶ AMTRAK has resumed operation of connecting bus services between Columbus and Madison (a Greyhound charter), and Carbondale-St. Louis (a Gulf Transport run). Service is also operated over the Bay Bridge between Oakland and San Francisco.



airline action

THE "GREAT SEAT WAR" WINDS DOWN

¶ In setting up the fare-hike package it just ordered (TC 26 APR 71), the Civil Aeronautics Board attempted for the first time to set domestic flight seating standards, and put an end to the current "seat war". Under the CAB ruling, six seats abreast would be considered standard coach seating in a Boeing 707. Carriers with five seats abreast would have to charge a seat premium of 8½ percent.

The standards call for five abreast in the coach of the DC-9, nine in the 747 and eight in the L-1011. As the rule applies only to the abreast seating, the rest of the cabin could have fewer rows than a competitor and be used as a lounge or in other ways without charging the premium.

RATE REPORT

¶ The CAB has allowed seven airlines (Braniff, Continental, Pan Am, TWA, United, Northwest and Western) to temporarily increase fares between mainland points and Hawaii. The increases are being slowed while the Board completes its review of an examiner's March decision in which they were recommended. One-way 1st-class fares will rise from \$165 to \$190 (from West Coast points), and coach tariffs to \$123 (peak) and \$108 from \$115 and \$100. Economy fares will also be hiked.

¶ DOT has urged the elimination of special air fares for families and for young people. The Department told the CAB such fares are unjustly discriminatory and should be replaced by experimental short-term fares that are truly proportional.United has asked the CAB for permission to establish low-level excursion and family fares between 17 cities in the Great Lakes area and Miami-Ft. Lauderdale.

EQUIPMENT REGISTER

¶ British businessmen, with governmental blessing, have quietly offered the Peking government a multi-million dollar credit to finance the purchase of six jetliners. Spokesmen for both sides said that the Peoples Republic is planning to establish air links between China and other Asian countries, Africa, Albania, France and to East Germany. Negotiators representing the Hawker-Siddeley group of aircraft companies, after more than two months of talks in Peking, were said to be nearing agreement for the sale of six Trident airliners to the Chinese.

¶ Eastern has said it signed a "conditional agreement" with Lockheed Aircraft reaffirming its intention to purchase L-1011 TriStar aircraft with Rolls-Royce RB211 engines. Congress is currently considering legislation bailing out Lockheed from its financial difficulties caused by the collapse of Rolls-Royce, and the Eastern move is seen as a bid to show support for the California firm. Eastern plans to purchase 50 TriStars....Executive Jet Aviation, the Penn Central-controlled air-taxi carrier, has signed a letter of intent to sell one of its two Boeing 727 jet aircraft to Ariana Afghan Airlines. Penn Central has been ordered to divest itself of the air carrier, largely because it apparently never got permission to acquire the firm initially. EJA has sold two of its three 707s and apparently plans to sell the other 727 as well. The planes were purchased in hopes of acquiring Johnson Flying Service of Montana; the petition to do so was withdrawn.

SAN FRANCISCO: MUNI Drops the Other Shoe

Service on one of the San Francisco Municipal Railway's transit routes will be converted as part of a \$44 million modernization program from bus to streetcar!

The addition of this sixth MUNI streetcar route to the existing five will replace part of the 72 Haight-Sunset bus. It is a key feature of a MUNI rehabilitation program for its rail lines, both electric- and cable-powered, and was approved by the city's Board of Supervisors last week. The program is to be financed through sale of bonds by a non-profit corporation set up earlier to acquire new buses, streetcars and trackless trolleys (TC 5/3).

Under the plan, previously approved by the city Public Utilities Commission, trackage will be built in the median of a wide arterial street, Sunset Boulevard, between the existing N-Judah and L-Taraval rail lines. The new route and the existing ones will eventually feed into the now a-building MUNI subway beneath Market Street in and near the downtown area. When complete, a few years hence, the subway will give streetcar users a high-speed, traffic free route between the downtown area and existing rail tunnels beneath the city's hills. Riders on the K-Ingleside, L-Taraval and M-Ocean View routes will enter the subway at the West Portal of the existing Twin Peaks Tunnel. Users of the N-Judah, J-Church and the new line will ride into the subway through a portal under construction near the intersection of Market and Church Streets, about a half mile east and north of the east end of the existing Twin Peaks tube.

MUNI officials, describing the new streetcar "revenue line" in terms reminiscent of those used for past bus conversions elsewhere, said that the new Sunset route will bring "superior transit service—quiet and smog-free—to this attractive boulevard, enhancing its character even more. The roadbed, unlike that of the M-Ocean View line on 19th Avenue, will be landscaped, with sound-muffling ground cover between the rails."

In a report accompanying the proposal, the MUNI observed: "When transit systems throughout the nation were phasing streetcars and trolley coaches out of service in favor of the so-called 'flexibility' of diesel coaches, the Public Utilities Commission recalled that San Franciscans are a different breed. They began to look at the internal combustion engine with a jaundiced eye in the early sixties. On November 25, 1969, the Public Utilities Commission adopted a resolution instructing its staff to give particular emphasis to the use of electrically powered transit vehicles in planning future MUNI improvements."

The connection will have an important side benefit to MUNI management, for it will allow the property to reduce sharply what is essentially deadhead operation totaling 4,000 vehicle hours a year. At present all MUNI streetcar routes begin in downtown San Francisco then fan out west of the business district like the fingers of a hand. Existing car-storage facilities lie beyond the end of regular revenue service of one of the less well patronized routes. Vehicles entering service on some routes must first run downtown before doubling back to the ends of the lines.

A second benefit will be the capability for "balancing" subway portal vehicle loadings. MUNI's present operating plans call for K, L and M cars to be linked at West Portal into trains for the subway run downtown (much as the old Chicago, Aurora & Elgin interurban once did on its West Suburban service to the Loop via the Garfield Park el). J and N cars would mate at the Duboce portal. A third line feeding the subway through the Duboce entrance would result in three-car trains on each leg of the subway/surface line.

Other features of the improvement program include renewing most of the existing trackage, revising MUNI overhead to accommodate the pantographs that the new cars will have, modernizing the Forest Hill Station of the Twin Peaks Tunnel and updating the underground signal system. New shops and carhouses are also on the improvement program.

And, the cable lines will have their tracks renewed, new safety devices added to the existing fleet and better headlights. A short extension to the Powell-Mason route will bring that line closer to Fisherman's Wharf.

--Charles F. Rozema