

Transport Central



WILL THE
TRACKLESS
TROLLEY
REGAIN
FAVOR?



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column one

WILL THE TRACKLESS TROLLEY REGAIN FAVOR?: A FINAL WORD

The headline on the cover of this issue comes from a similar editorial in the March 31, 1928 issue of the ELECTRIC RAILWAY JOURNAL by Charles Gordon. In the editorial Mr. Gordon correctly prophesied the resurgence of the hybrid vehicle (beginning with the successful Salt Lake City venture in 1928) after a series of at-times abortive experiments dating back to the early Twenties.

We have spoken in these columns before about what Lee Birch of the Ohio Brass Company once called the "art of seeing all vehicles"; the wisdom of using each mode properly, without being stampeded by industrial or political propagan-da into wholesale conversions to motor buses because it is "the thing to do."

Certainly, the trolley coach is not a universal panacea. But neither is rapid transit, the streetcar or the motor bus. Each is peculiarly suited to particular uses, relative to density, traffic flow and topographical conditions and each mode should be evaluated and applied accordingly. While no one this side of an institution would seriously recommend Peoria, for example, for high-speed, high-level heavy rapid transit, no one with any urban transit "moxie" could justifiably argue that Commonwealth Avenue in Boston might be served better with motor buses, or that a high-density fixed route such as Frankford in Philadelphia, Ossington in Toronto or Roosevelt in Chicago could benefit from diesel conversion.

This is a column devoted to biases, and we plead guilty to a prejudice in favor of electric vehicles--not just trolley coaches--where they can be used properly. The lemming-like wholesale conversions in the years following World War II in the guise of "modernization" in most cases assisted rather than forestalled the decline of urban transit in the U.S., and many of these services are going to have to be put back at huge cost if we are to have any semblance of mobility in our urban areas.

The motor bus is not all-powerful; consider Fort Wayne and Shreveport, for example. In both cities, the trolley coach performed the lion's share of service; in both cities, the simultaneous withdrawal of electric services in favor of motor buses literally torpedoed the riding habit. Fort Wayne now boasts little off-peak service (and has gone public for the usual financial reasons), and Shreveport's patronage is a fraction of what it was in 1965.

One transit official critical of this publication's stand on the trackless trolley has accused this reporter and others with similar prejudices of jumping on the ecological bandwagon (trolley coaches do not pollute at all, while even with an EIP kit, a motor bus, gas or diesel befouls the air) and asks where we all were when people were littering "L" platforms with gum wrappers--if indeed we are interested in environmental rehabilitation as other than a smoke screen.

Well, you can die from diesel exhaust, but there are no fatalities on record from gum wrappers. We submit that, regardless of the cost, the trackless trolley will regain favor. We can no longer afford to worship, obeisant and benighted, before the temple of Detroit.

--RICHARD R. KUNZ



railway report

AMTRAK ADDENDA

¶ More on that "Lake Shore Limited" Chicago-New York via Cleveland-Buffalo run: This gets a bit complicated, but because the legislature of the state of Indiana is not currently in session, the new run does not stop in South Bend, although a station appropriate to the service exists and could be used easily. Even so, the train does stop in neighboring Elkhart, but only for a crew change. If all this sounds confusing, it is a certainty that even the Penn Central is having difficulty comprehending the situation--for one thing, schedules are not currently in evidence for the traveling public, and many PC personnel are aware of the train's resuscitation but few have many details of the run. It would appear that "word of mouth" advertising is being utilized as far as trains 67-68 are concerned.

Through a representative of a Chicago-area road, we were able to obtain this accurate timecard of the new run, which contradicts some of the data heretofore recorded in these pages (TC 10 MAY 71):

AMTRAK #68
[Read down]

AMTRAK #69
[Read up]

1:10 PM CDT	lv	CHICAGO	ar	2:25 PM CDT
6:25 PM EDT	ar	TOLEDO	lv	11:15 AM EDT
6:35 PM	lv	TOLEDO	ar	11:05 AM
9:00 PM	ar	CLEVELAND	lv	8:40 AM
9:10 PM	lv	CLEVELAND	ar	8:35 AM
12:45 AM	ar	BUFFALO	lv	4:55 AM
12:55 AM	lv	BUFFALO	ar	4:45 AM
3:26 AM	lv	SYRACUSE	lv	2:09 AM
6:02 AM	ar	SCHENECTADY	lv	11:38 PM
6:20 AM	ar	ALBANY	lv	11:20 PM
6:35 AM	lv	ALBANY	ar	11:10 PM
7:35 AM (D)	ar	POUGHKEEPSIE	--	-----
8:20 AM (D)	ar	CROTON-HARMON	--	-----
9:15 AM	ar	NEW YORK (GCT)	lv	8:30 PM

(D) Discharge passengers only. Normal consist is one 10-6 sleeper and one 6-bedroom-lounge; one diner; and two unreserved coaches.

Note that Erie is not listed (although Pennsylvania supposedly put up a guarantee of its own for the service. For some other inexplicable reason, Elkhart is listed as a stop on the train board at Chicago Union Station, although it is not in the "official" timetable. In addition, Schenectady and Colonie are listed on the selfsame board as separate stops, although they are one and the same.

¶ The accounts of the coming of train service once again to Cleveland in the PLAIN DEALER have been masterpieces of understatement. "They counted upward of 100 revelers crammed into the area of Union Terminal known as Track 15 when the first AMTRAK passenger train came into Cleveland from New York," the story began.

"Although everyone agreed it was a fun occasion and some wondered when so many persons last awaited arrival of a scheduled train in Cleveland, there were those who thought it would have been a bigger boost to AMTRAK if most of the crowd had

bought tickets and climbed aboard for the rest of the run to Toledo and Chicago. Nick Mileti, owner of the Barons and Cavaliers, did his bit to set an example; he and some business associates rode to Toledo where Mayor Harry Kessler and a greeting party of 200 were waiting (for the train, not Mileti.).

"The AP said 20 paying passengers were aboard at Toledo and nine more got on there. There was some confusion about how many were on the train when it came in to Cleveland; a spokesman for the Greater Cleveland Growth Association said 22 got off. Other estimates had four debarking here (in Cleveland) but the Growth Association spokesman said the larger party had been overlooked because they came from the coach at the end of the six-car train and were hidden from sight by the welcoming throng.

"The music of a six-piece band playing 'Happy Days Are Here Again' set the mood at Union Terminal. While passengers, 15 of them, were boarding, Francis A. Coy, president of the May Company (a Cleveland department store) read a proclamation from Mayor Carl Stokes declaring May 'AMTRAK month.'

"While the cars still bore Penn Central markings, a veteran news photographer who has seen many trains come and go reported the coaches appeared to have been cleaned. 'You could see in the windows, and the lights were on, and there wasn't the usual bunch of railroadmen deadheading to Toledo,' he added succinctly."

¶ In a letter to AMTRAK head David Kendall, Ohio Republican Senator Robert Taft Jr. pointed out that operation of Cleveland Union Terminal is a heavy burden on AMTRAK and the state of Ohio, which must pay its portion of two-thirds of the cost of maintaining the New York-Cleveland-Chicago run. The annual loss of the run is estimated at \$3,000,000; cost of operating the terminal at \$1,000,000. Taft suggested a new, inexpensive depot could be built on land owned by Penn Central at W. 3rd Street, or a platform could be built on E. 9th Street, with a platform to connect it with Burke Lakefront Airport.

¶ With the defection of the Rio Grande from AMTRAK ranks, the route of the Chicago-San Francisco run was shifted to UP rails between Denver and Ogden. Since the line is faster than the scenic route it replaced, the schedule was also speeded up, according to the following.

MON-THU-SAT (Read down)			TUE-FRI-SUN (Read up)		
7:45 AM	lv	DENVER	ar		5:30 PM
10:35 AM	lv	CHEYENNE	lv		3:05 PM
11:55 AM	lv	LARAMIE	lv		1:25 PM
8:45 PM	ar	OGDEN	lv		4:30 AM
9:15 PM	lv	OGDEN	ar		4:00 AM
6:45 AM	lv	RENO	lv		4:50 PM
11:30 AM	lv	SACRAMENTO	lv		11:59 AM
1:30 PM	ar	OAKLAND	lv		9:50 AM
2:00 PM	ar	SAN FRANCISCO	lv		9:20 AM

TUE-FRI-SUN WED-THU-SAT

Note: San Francisco-Oakland via motor coach connection service.
A saving of 1:45 (WB) and 1:50 (EB) is represented by the switch to UP rails.

DART DATA

¶ A group of five Indianapolis men have formed a for-profit corporation to operate their own passenger train between Chicago and Cincinnati. Corey Jones, president of Downtown Area Rapid Transit Co. (DART), said his group intends to start the service by mid-June if DART and the Penn Central can come to terms by then.

The train would use rails of the old Pennsylvania Railroad through Richmond, Anderson, Kokomo and Logansport, a route which had a daily passenger train until the advent of AMTRAK. AMTRAK operates Chicago-Cincinnati service, but via a different line (through Indianapolis).

DART's train will be a streamlined, self-propelled diesel unit (presumably RDC) purchased from the Santa Fe last winter. It is now being overhauled and divided into coach and lounge sections, and will be capable of pulling a coach trailer if ridership demand warrants.

The train would leave Cincinnati in the morning and return from Chicago in the late afternoon. Penn Central general manager of passenger operations F. S. King is currently preparing cost estimates for operating DART's train, which under existing union agreements can be run with a crew of three, rather than the five or six of a conventional diesel-powered locomotive-hauled train. (CS-T)

"GET A HORSE"

AMTRAK's decision to include Wyoming in its national passenger service network (via UP) has spared some Rawlins (Wyo) businessmen from embarrassment. Piqued by a threatened loss of service, the men formed a company to provide "dependable horse-drawn service" to replace the trains, but they couldn't find stage coaches for the horses to draw. (WSJ)

THE MEN UPSTAIRS

¶ The Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul & Pacific, joining the long list of other major railroads that have taken such action in the past decade, has announced plans for the formation of a holding company to diversify operations outside of the rail industry. The holding company, tentatively named Chicago Milwaukee Corporation, is to become parent of the Milwaukee Road through an exchange of stock.

CIVIL RIGHTS REPORT

¶ Prompted by the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, the Interstate Commerce Commission on May 12 announced plans to determine whether or not racial discrimination exists in the transportation industries it regulates. ICC Chairman George Stafford said the agency will attempt to determine whether or not it has the authority to put a stop to discrimination in employment should it find any.

The action had been urged by the Civil Rights Commission in its report of last October. That report found that little was being done by the federal government to enforce civil rights laws and decried what it called bureaucratic hostility and inertia in civil rights enforcement. The ICC will now attempt to determine if it has jurisdiction, and whether it should promulgate rules or undertake some other program respecting equal opportunity practices in surface transportation.



metro memo

WHO'S GOT THE PLAN?

¶ The Chicago area mass transit projects currently in line for federal funding stand to lose a significant portion of that funding because of the inability of area planning agencies, despite much talk and arm-waving, to come up with a regional transportation plan that will meet federal standards.

Current UMTA regulations prescribe that, in order to qualify for two-thirds federal funding, a project must conform to an area-wide master transportation plan including all modes (highways, for example, in addition to public transit facilities). Chicago has no such plan for the entire region, although the area south of 63rd Street in the city extending into Indiana was the subject of the exhaustive STACS (Southward Transit Area Coordinating Study) report about a year ago. This plan, while valid for the area it covers, does not approach regional status; nor does an "interim report" prepared just a few weeks ago.

The net result of the lack of such a plan is that funding for the projects (4 are currently in progress: the downtown Chicago subway network--not approved as yet, but in progress; and new commuter rail equipment for the Illinois Central, Milwaukee and Burlington) will be limited to a 50% contribution from the Department of Transportation. In the case of the IC cars, this means the railroad will have to come up with an additional sixth of the \$40,000,000 price tag of the new GSI-built double-deck units.

In the case of the other two commuter roads' proposals, the additional amount needed to insure purchase of the required number of cars is not available, particularly in the Milwaukee Road's plan, as the road (which is obligated to provide the local share) is hard-pressed to come up with the original third of its \$13,000,000 requirement. As far as the downtown subway is concerned, the lack of a comprehensive plan to provide the needed sixth might well torpedo the entire project, as the additional \$100,000,000 or so needed to finance the almost \$1,000,000,000 system is outside the city's financial reach.

DOT DATA

¶ UMTA has made available these funds:

- ✓ \$312,037 to Coral Gables, Florida, to help the city purchase 13 air-conditioned diesel transit buses, giving the city a 100-per cent modern, air-conditioned, air suspension bus fleet. The grant also will allow the city to buy an automatic wash rack and related maintenance equipment.
- ✓ \$90,000 to the city of Chicago to help finance a technical study which is to determine future mass transit needs to and from O'Hare International Airport. The #40 O'HAREXPRESS bus (and the Kennedy rapid transit with which it connects) was funded by UMTA.
- ✓ \$202,823 to RCA, the third in a series of contracts to test advanced methods of electronically locating and tracking vehicles operating in urban areas. The RCA method utilizes miniaturized, low-power transmitters placed in signposts at intersections and other selected points.

MORE "FREEWAY FLYERS"

¶ A \$17,000,000 plan to expand Transport Company bus service in Milwaukee County through government subsidy has been proposed by county transportation officials.

The plan recommends the county:

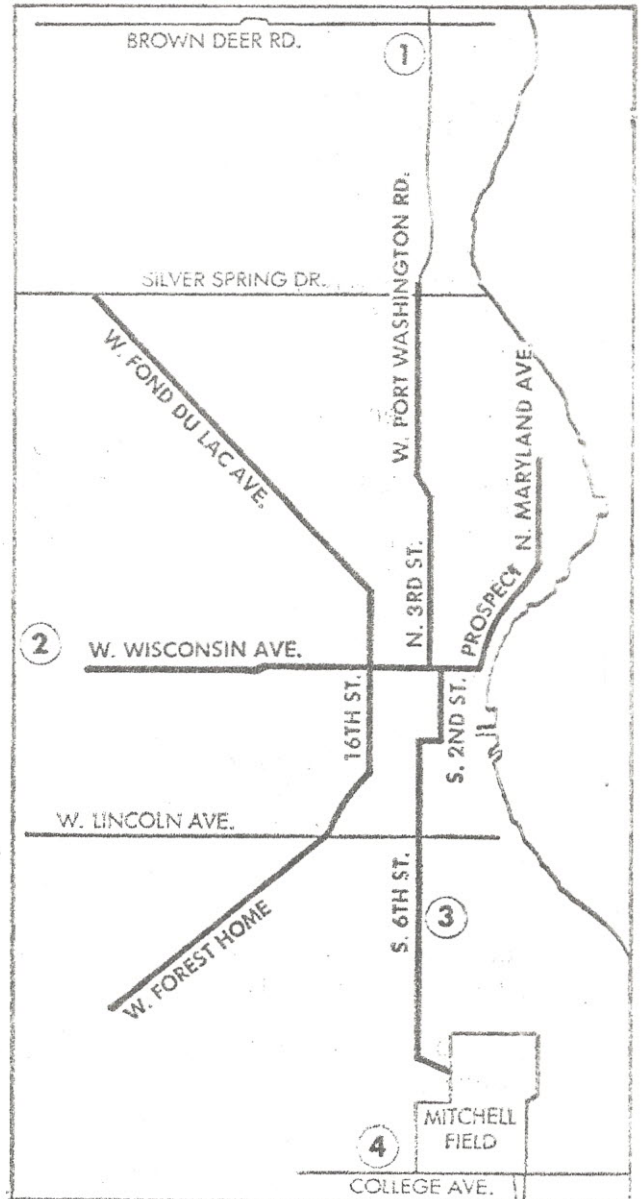
- ✓ Purchase 100 buses for a new system of express routes on existing city streets. The estimated two-year purchase and operating cost would be \$10,530,000.
- ✓ Buy an additional 100 buses in 1972 and 50 in 1973 to add to the total bus fleet, leasing all buses to the company at a nominal rate. The estimated two-year cost: \$5,750,000.
- ✓ Build four parking lots containing 950 spaces to expand the existing Freeway Flyer system of express buses on freeways. The estimated tab would be \$300,000, with most of the land county-owned.
- ✓ Construct 60 shelters in 1972 and 200 in 1973 to protect waiting bus passengers from rain and snow. Estimated cost would be \$520,000.
- ✓ Conduct an informational campaign on bus service, provide more and better route maps and timetables and explore future merchandising efforts. The estimated two-year cost would be \$140,000.

The plan's intent is to preserve and improve bus service prior to a decision on whether the county should buy the privately owned Transport Company.

The plan also analyzed possible fare reductions for the elderly as an experiment. However, it does not recommend such action.

Interim subsidy is designed to bolster transit use and prevent deterioration of service during what may be a long period of debate over public ownership.

The major proposal of the plan is for express buses that would stop only at transfer points and locations that were major generators of traffic. Buses in the experiment would run only five minutes apart. The report concludes that "providing public assistance or subsidies for mass transit is not unique" and that most metropolitan areas have moved into public ownership. (The Transport Company is one of the largest city companies to remain under private ownership).



Heavy lines in this map represent streets which would be used for express bus service into downtown as proposed in an interim subsidy plan Tuesday. Numbered areas represent a separate proposal for parking lots, mostly in interchanges of existing freeways. Freeway Flyers express buses would be extended to serve the lots. They are: 1. North-South Freeway and W. Brown Deer Rd., River Hills; 2. Zoo Freeway and W. Watertown Plank Rd.; 3. North-South Freeway and W. Holt Ave.; North-South Freeway and W. College Ave.

URBAN POTPOURRI

¶ Penn Central has announced that June 1 was the "goal date" for the signing of an agreement for the MTA takeover of the road's Harlem and Hudson Division rail commuter lines....A minor change in policy: Buried in a statement outlining the need for state subsidy of the CTA was this sentence--"Present riders will be retained and new riders attracted only if dependable, safe, modern, *air conditioned* equipment can be made available. The Board's previous thinking was that air conditioning was a luxury necessary only on the rapid transit; CTA, unlike most big city carriers, operates only ten air-conditioned buses at present. Five are normally run without climatizing in the summer, and none are ever chartered.

¶ A 17-week bus strike in Lansing, Michigan has ended with the signing of a new contract between Amalgamated local 1039 and the newly-formed Metropolitan Lansing Mass Transportation Corporation. The not-for-profit corporation will be subsidized by the city pending the creation of a transit authority....BART train control equipment installation is about on schedule. Southern Alameda county station installation should be complete for the A line by June 16, and the line will hopefully be open in January....BART consultants have recommended the purchase of 30,000 pint-sized electric cars for feeder service to the rapid transit in Contra Costa county. Commuters would rent the cars for daily service to and from BART.

¶ Governor Ogilvie has appointed Evanston resident and Chicago investment banker Lawrence G. Sucusy to a seven-year term on the CTA board, replacing retiring former state representative Bernice Van der Vries....Automatic ticket-vending machines will be tested beginning May 17 at several Chicago area IC electric commuter stations....The South Shore has been granted a fare hike ranging from 35 to 56 per cent; holders of monthly Chicago-Gary tickets will now pay over \$60.00....CTA Budd-built rapid transit cars (2200 series) are now in base service in two and four car sets, after an "embargo" against their use outside rush hours was lifted. Budd engineers have reworked a sufficient number of the units to permit their use.

¶ A portion of Madison Avenue in New York (from 42d to 57th Streets) is being considered as a permanent pedestrian mall, banned to all but emergency and bus traffic....Officials on the New York Board of Estimate have come out against a proposal to charge tolls on the city's East River bridges, effectively blocking such a move. The revenues would have been used to maintain the 30¢ subway and bus fares.

¶ Tough new national air quality standards announced last week by the Environmental Protection Agency will force sharp restrictions on auto traffic in most cities and in effect promote the use of mass transit facilities....GM will build 132 diesel buses with EIP kits for the Golden Gate Bridge District in all probability; no firm bid on a gas turbine engine for the 20 transit units....The SP has petitioned for an average 10% boost in San Francisco peninsula commuter fares....The revival of "service cars" (jitneys) has been proposed for St. Louis--in the face of strong opposition from Bi-State Transit.

¶ Suburban Chicago's West Towns Bus Company has been granted a 5¢ hike in its local fares....Tri-State Coach Lines, linking O'Hare with several south Cook County areas, has petitioned for a \$1 hike in its fares....The Greater Peoria Mass Transit District is planning a new advertising campaign; the GPMTD realized a profit over the last two months of operation....San Mateo county is assisting in financing a study of whether it should join BART....AC Transit will need more than \$500,000 to re-route the system's bus lines to BART connections....Cleveland Transit's Windermere station on the rapid will see a high-rise project built over it on air rights.