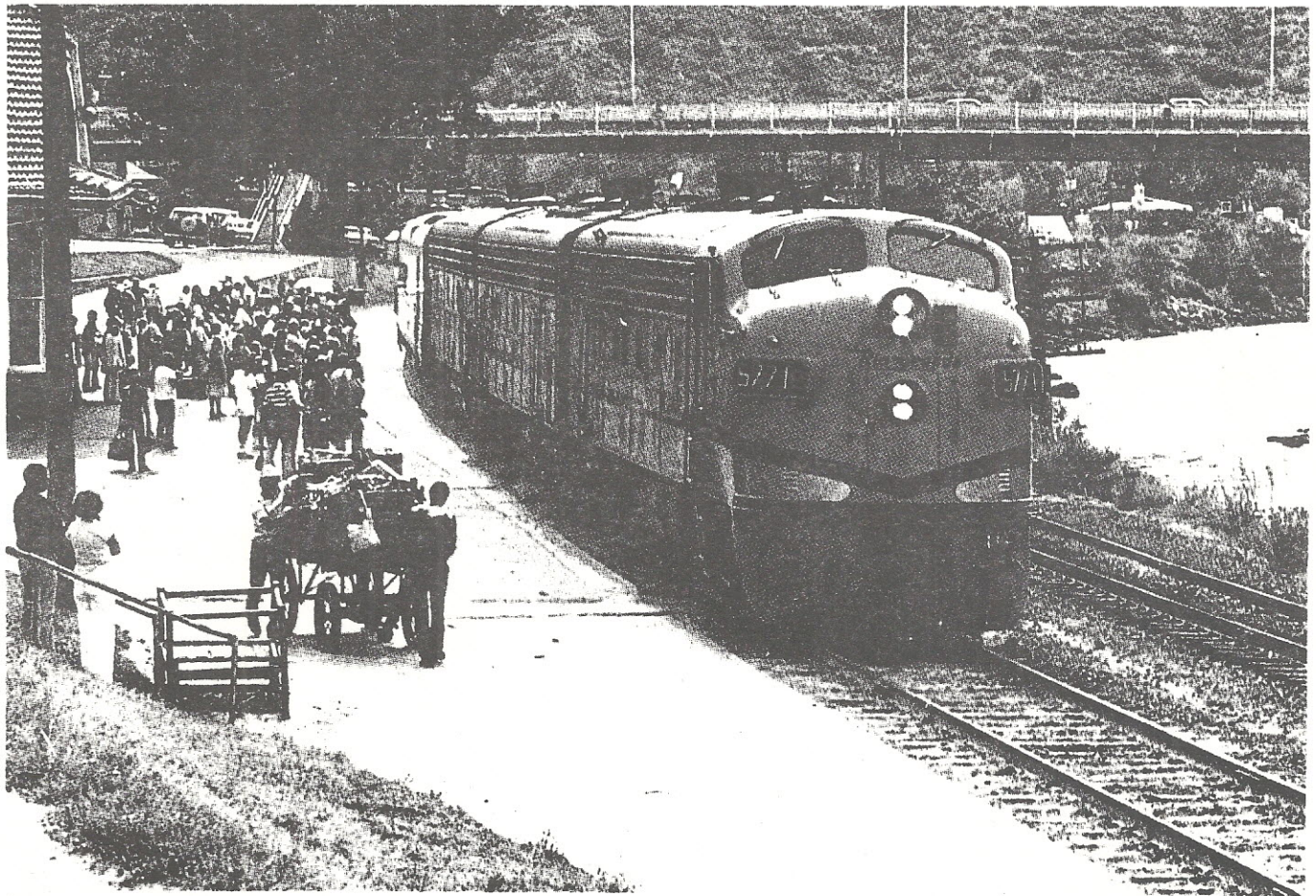
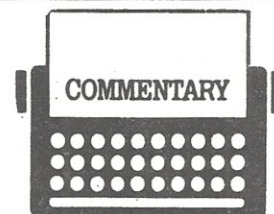


Transport Central



MARCH 1983

INTERFACE



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COVER: The *Rio Grande Zephyr* pauses to collect Denver-bound passengers at Glenwood Springs, busiest intermediate point on the Rio Grande route. —Rail Ventures

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SWIFT IMPRESSIONS

6 myths about public transit

[A different view of public transit, from the "Personal View" Op-Ed column in the *Chicago Sun-Times*.—Ed.]

Year after year, we hear that the RTA needs more money. Over and over, we hear the same stories or myths that try to convince us we should give more to support public transportation.

Since I enjoy debunking myths, let's examine some of them.

Myth No. 1: Raising the state gasoline tax to subsidize the RTA will solve Chicago's public transit financing problems.

If the state increases the gasoline tax, many people will drive less to save money—but not necessarily increase their use of public transportation. Service stations now on the financial fringe will go under. Some workers in petroleum-related industries will lose their jobs; since the Chicago area has so many of them, the RTA and CTA will lose riders. Unless government is exempt from the tax increase, public transportation systems will have to pay more for fuel, too. When these systems have spent their expected new revenues and the revenues then fail to meet these expectations, a higher subsidy will be considered—and the vicious tax cycle will continue.

Myth No. 2: Public transportation provides the poor with greater mobility.

David Stockman, the President's budget director, points out that only 23.5 percent of transportation operating subsidies benefit low-income families—a terribly inefficient way to help the disadvantaged. In a 1981 study, Chicago urbanologist Pierre deVise discovered that the average suburban rail commuter earns \$26,570 a year and gets the biggest RTA subsidy.

Public transportation places a triple whammy on the poor. First, they are blamed for its problems. Second, many cannot afford it; that's why so many form rider pools to low-paying jobs in rickety old cars. Third, the poor pay the same percentage sales tax or gas tax to subsidize transportation as the affluent.

Myth No. 3: Without public transportation, Chicago businesses will fail and the whole state will suffer.

A few days after the September rail strike began, Chicago newspapers found employee absenteeism at near-normal levels. Similar discoveries were made during transit strikes in Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia and Birmingham. The strike did not shut down Chicago businesses, but it did shut down at least five auto and truck assembly plants and a number of coal mines; these industries are unionized, just like the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers that initiated the action.

Myth No. 4: Public transportation is neces-

sary to Chicago because it carries thousands of workers to their jobs.

A 1981 RTA press release states that it owns capital assets worth \$15 billion, excluding land. According to the 1980 census, 548,810 Chicago area workers use public transportation to get to their jobs. If the RTA sold all of its capital assets at their estimated value, it could buy each of those commuters a new Mercedes Benz—and throw in \$5,000 for gas. And the RTA could still collect money from land rental.

Myth No. 5: Public transportation is a public necessity.

When we consider things essential to human life, such as food, shelter, clothing and medical care, the RTA and public transportation pale by comparison. Perhaps Chicago are commuters should spend several days each year working on farms, at construction sites, in garment factories and in hospitals to atone for the money they now receive in transit subsidies.

Myth No. 6: Deregulation and private ownership of public forms of transportation does not work.

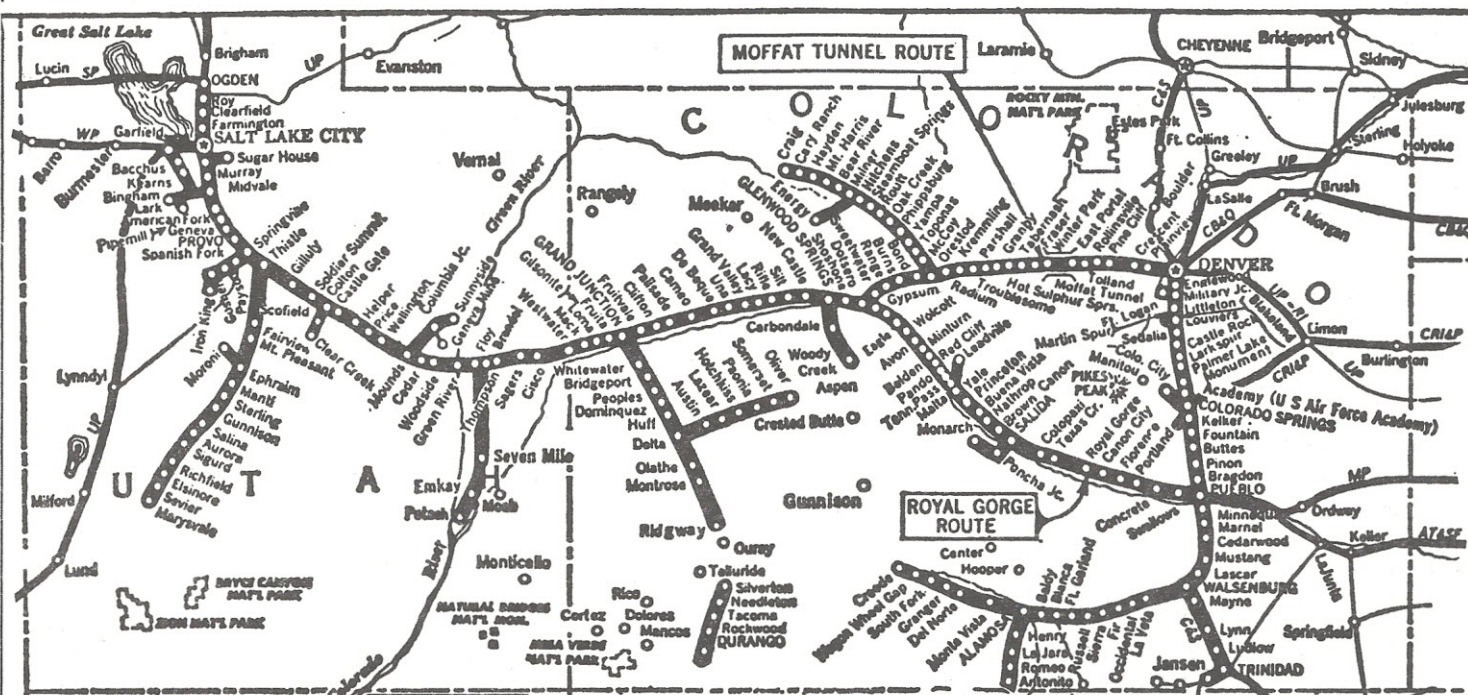
Recently the California Public Utilities Commission ruled that a fleet of private jitney vans could operate in competition with the Southern California Rapid Transit District of Los Angeles. The commission's transportation director stated that the vans did not "skim the cream" off the transit authority's revenues, as some had feared, but actually cut the agency's deficit by reducing the need for extra rush-hour buses and drivers.

Florida, Ohio, Wisconsin and Arizona have deregulated their intrastate buses, and new jobs were created when many smaller bus companies moved in to fill routes vacated by the larger ones. After San Diego began deregulating its taxicabs in 1979, the number of cabs increased and fares became among the lowest in the state. Legal jitney operations are permitted in San Francisco, Atlantic City, Miami and Baton Rouge, and illegal jitneys flourish in poorer sections of most major U.S. cities. In Chicago, it's estimated that unsubsidized, privately chartered buses carry 3,000 commuters daily; they generate new tax revenue through their operation.

Let's abandon these myths. Instead of increasing taxes, the Legislature should deregulate all forms of public transportation in the state. This will create new jobs in the private sector and new tax revenues, and we can unload our financially strapped public transit system.

—Gene Haschak

RAIL



Always on Wednesday

Picture this: The Interstate Commerce Commission has been asked to rule on a petition to discontinue a passenger rail service. Not exactly news? Perhaps not (although such petitions to the ICC have been few and far between in the dozen years since Amtrak has been the keeper of the flame for varnish).

What makes this petition unique is that, in effect, the ICC is being asked to approve the *increase* of service from triweekly to daily between Denver and Salt Lake City.

All of this comes about because the Denver & Rio Grande Western, last non-Amtrak operator of long-distance passenger railroad service in the continental U.S., is pulling out of the market after almost 12 years of going it alone with the *Rio Grande Zephyr*. D&RGW almost joined Amtrak in 1971, but had second thoughts about daily rail service over its busy line and opted out, forcing the Corporation to detour its Chicago-San Francisco train via Cheyenne and the Union Pacific (albeit on a faster schedule).

Thus, come April 25, the colorful (and unreconstructed) D&RGW *Rio Grande Zephyr*, with its spanking-clean post-war equipment, will be replaced by new-generation Amtrak equipment, SuperLiners and all.

By virtue of the *San Francisco Zephyr* rerouting over D&RGW rails between Denver and Salt Lake City (switching there to UP iron for the short jaunt to Ogden), on-line communities like Glenwood Springs, Grand Junction and Provo will have the luxury of daily service (up from the "never-on-Wednesday" tri-weekly cycle of the *RGZ*). Contrariwise, Wyoming communities like Cheyenne, Laramie,

Rawlins, Rock Springs, Green River, and Evanston (as well as Greeley, Colorado) will now have no rail service at all.

By all accounts, the route of the *Rio Grande Zephyr* through the Moffat Tunnel and over the rugged hills of Colorado and Utah was one of the most scenic in American railroading — and a route with a long passenger history.

Prior to 1883 when Denver & Rio Grande trackage in Colorado was linked with that of the Denver & Rio Grande Western in Utah, the D&RG had been primarily a carrier of local passengers. Its tracks went from Denver 200 miles southward to Trinidad and almost 300 miles to Leadville; Grand Junction was more than 400 miles away, while Silverton required a journey of almost 500 miles. The completion of this Denver-Salt Lake City route of 735 miles put the Rio Grande system into the east-west long-haul business, although interchange with other roads was not possible because of the D&RGW's narrow gauge.

In 1890 the original route over Marshall Pass through Gunnison and Montrose to Grand Junction was replaced by a standard-gauge line via Leadville, Tennessee Pass and Glenwood Springs—a combination of new trackage, converted narrow-gauge track, and existing 3-rail line. Over this new line, a through sleeper was handled between Denver and Los Angeles (the Central Pacific forwarded it west of Ogden). When the Gould family took control, Rio Grande main line varnish included Pullman sleepers from Chicago via the Burlington, and to Colorado Springs over the Rock Island. The MoPac delivered one from St. Louis to Pueblo; all were destined for San Francisco via the CP.

rail

During the first few years of the 20th century the Goulds had been assembling a coast-to-coast system, but had been blocked by the Union Pacific at both Salt Lake City and Ogden. Frustrated, the Rio Grande financed an "extension", the Western Pacific Railroad, roughly paralleling the CP from Salt Lake City to Oakland. Begun at either end in 1906, the WP was ready for through traffic in 1910, and immediately captured the Chicago and St. Louis sleepers (the Rock Island car remained on the CP). The coming of the War in 1916 terminated through service, but the sleepers were reinstated in the 1920's, operating even through the Depression a decade later, when a significant change remolded the D&RGW.

The Dotsero Cutoff between Denver & Salt Lake trackage and that of the Rio Grande was completed (including the famed Moffat Tunnel) in 1934, shortening the hitherto-circuitous route via Pueblo and Salida by about 175 miles. Over this new line, the *Panorama* operated on an overnight schedule, and in its consist were the Rock Island/SP and Burlington/WP Pullmans. By 1939, when World's Fairs opened in New York and San Francisco, the through train was rechristened the *Exposition Flyer*, with a consist of coaches, sleepers and a lounge operating through from Chicago to Oakland. But the *Flyer's* schedule was not convenient for passengers wanting to see the spectacular scenery enroute, and the trio of managements believed that modern equipment would increase ridership. Accordingly, the Budd Company was petitioned to build a stainless-steel fleet (including domes) for a new train, the soon-to-become-legendary *California Zephyr*, which entered service in 1949.

But economics caught up with the CZ, and the Interstate Commerce Commission allowed the Western Pacific to drop its portion of the run in March 1970. Quoting *TC* (23 March 1970: 'Hail and Farewell' — "A train is dead. The *California Zephyr*, barely 21, had not the prestige of the *Twentieth Century Limited*, nor the classic opulence of the *Super Chief*, but it laid claim to the most magnificent scenery in America, the majestic Feather River Canyon. The CZ, like so many other trains before it, was a victim of the times; its relaxed and leisurely pace was not for the modern traveler. Reams have been written about its demise; the only thing we can add is a note of genuine regret that our children will not be able to enjoy a unique segment of Americana."

Faced with the loss of its western connection, the Rio Grande was given permission to cut its portion of the run to the present tri-weekly frequency, renaming the stub the *Rio Grande Zephyr*; concurrent with the change, the Burlington segments became independent Chicago-Denver runs, and the paralleling Ogden-Oakland *SP City of San Francisco* went to tri-weekly service.

With the latter order came an ICC mandate for D&RGW to provide a connection at Ogden from the *RGZ* to the *City*. The intent of the ICC was that this connection be a rail extension of the D&RGW train over its freight-only trackage between Salt Lake City and Ogden; however, the Rio Grande refused to comply, and a bus persists to this day (Amtrak's Los Angeles-Ogden *Desert Wind* uses a different station facility in

Salt Lake and UP tracks to Ogden; presumably the new through run would do likewise).

When what later became Amtrak was in the process of formation in 1970, route selection criteria for a Chicago-San Francisco train favored the Burlington between Chicago and Denver, and the former *California Zephyr* route through Grand Junction and Salt Lake City for its scenic value and market potential (even though the present UP route through Cheyenne and Ogden was rated two to three hours faster). Between Winnemucca and Sacramento, the Donner Pass route via Reno was chosen over the Feather River Canyon route via Oroville (WP) on the basis of higher population and traffic potential.

However, a decision in late April 1971 by the D&RGW not to join Amtrak forced a last-minute change in routing west of Denver. In fact, Amtrak's first timetable showed that the tri-weekly operation west of Denver would run via Grand Junction and Salt Lake City; however, the Corporation had to utilize the previously rejected alignment via Cheyenne and Ogden. Although that timecard showed that the Chicago-Oakland train would be named the *California Zephyr*, when it was forced to change the name, Amtrak elected not to use the CZ name. On days when the train operated only to Denver, it was dubbed the *Denver Zephyr*. On the three days per week when the train was extended to Oakland, it was officially unnamed west of the Mile-High City, but was popularly known as the *City of San Francisco*; it received the latter appellation in November 1971, and became the *San Francisco Zephyr* in June 1972, when the first daily through Chicago-Oakland operation began for the summer. Although the Denver-Oakland segment reverted to tri-weekly with the coming of autumn, it once again resumed daily operation the following summer and has remained a daily train ever since, and now incorporates through cars to Los Angeles (via the *Desert Wind*) and Portland-Seattle (via the *Pioneer*) connecting at Ogden.

The Rio Grande had planned to join Amtrak in 1971, but pulled out at literally the eleventh-hour when the Aydelott management began to have second thoughts about having to deal with a daily train. The railroad believed it better to retain the stub *RGZ* as a tri-weekly venture with its former *California Zephyr* cars and D&RGW passenger F-units for the five years required by the Amtrak Act and then discontinue it.

However, the vest-pocket *Rio Grande Zephyr* soon became a popular favorite, often being sold out months in advance. And, when the railroad petitioned the ICC in 1976 to drop the runs, the Commission wisely refused, citing the "increased patronage" of the varnish as a compelling reason to keep it running. Despite continuing losses, the colorful train has operated virtually unchanged from the CZ era, with the bulk of its patronage day round-trippers between Denver and Glenwood Springs.

This "happy consequence" of a train (to quote the excellent "Rail Ventures" book, to which the reader is referred for a detailed description of a ride on the *RGZ*) is a collection of unique "vista dome" coaches (the concept of domes is said

CHICAGO-SAN FRANCISCO/OAKLAND (VIA DENVER-SALT LAKE CITY)			
1-17	Miles	TABLE 24	18-2
Daily		Operates Daily between Chicago and Denver	Daily
		(Burlington Northern)	
2 45 P M	0	lve..... CHICAGO (C.T.)..... arr.	11 50 A M
		(Union Station)	
3 22 P M	38	..... Aurora	11 05 A M
4 01 P M	83	..... Mendota	10 24 A M
4 20 P M	104	..... Princeton	10 03 A M
5 20 P M	162	..... Galesburg	9 10 A M
5 39 P M	179	..... Monmouth	8 42 A M
6 15 P M	206	..... Burlington	8 15 A M
6 40 P M	233	..... Mt. Pleasant	7 59 A M
7 21 P M	280	..... Ottumwa	6 58 A M
8 26 P M	360	..... Osceola	5 58 A M
9 05 P M	393	..... Creston	5 28 A M
10 50 P M	496	..... Omaha	3 34 A M
12 25 A M	551	..... Lincoln	2 29 A M
2 10 A M	648	..... Hastings	12 45 A M
3 20 A M	779	..... McCook (C.T.).....	10 50 P M
5 16 A M	922	..... Akron	7 45 P M
7 15 A M	1034	arr..... Denver (M.T.)..... lve.	6 00 P M
Leave Mon., Thurs. and Sat.		Operates Tri-Weekly between Denver and Oakland	Arrive Tue., Fri., and Sun.
		(D&RGW)	
7 45 A M	1034	lve..... Denver	5 30 P M
10 20 A M	1110	..... Granby	3 05 P M
11 45 A M	1163	..... Bond	1 30 P M
1 20 P M	1219	..... Glenwood Springs.....	11 55 A M
3 40 P M	1309	..... Grand Junction	10 00 A M
7 00 P M	1485	..... Hesper	6 25 A M
8 55 P M	1560	..... Provo	4 20 A M
10 00 P M	1604	arr..... Salt Lake City	3 15 A M
		(Union Pacific)	
10 15 P M	1604	lve..... Salt Lake City	3 00 A M
11 05 P M	1640	arr..... Ogden	2 10 A M
		(Southern Pacific)	
11 30 P M	1640	lve..... Ogden (M.T.).....	1 40 A M
2 30 A M	1867	..... Elko (P.T.).....	8 30 P M
3 15 A M	1889	..... Carlin	8 00 P M
8 45 A M	2177	..... Sparks	2 50 P M
9 00 A M	2180	..... Reno	2 30 P M
1 45 P M	2333	..... Sacramento	9 40 A M
3 45 P M	2420	arr..... OAKLAND (P.T.).....	7 30 A M
Arrive Tue., Fri., and Sun.			Leave Mon., Thurs. and Sat.

to have been inspired by the on-line Glenwood Canyon's great cliffs) with gourmet food still served in grand style. Using old but nicely maintained former CZ cars, the D&RGW operates this thrice-weekly streamliner between Denver and Salt Lake City through some of the finest mountain scenery to be found in the nation. The pace is not quick—570 miles in just over 14 hours—but no one should be in a hurry on a train like this. (Westbound runs leave Denver Monday, Thursday and Saturday; their eastbound counterparts leave Salt Lake City Tuesday, Friday and Sunday.)

Amtrak's assumption of service over the route brings mixed blessings. On the one hand, on-line towns will now have a daily train (not as detrimental to the D&RGW as might have been the case in 1971. According to "Passenger Train Journal", The freight slump has affected profits at Rio Grande. With Amtrak assuming the passenger service [under contract—D&RGW will not join the Corporation], the railroad converts a \$3,000,000 annual loss into a "for-hire" operation—and makes itself a more attractive merger partner. Also, with D&RGW now having trackage rights for freight as far as Kansas City [as a condition of the "MopUp" merger], much traffic has shifted to the Pueblo gateway away from Denver, with correspondingly less passenger-freight conflict east of Grand Junction.)

Thus, the Rio Grande generally ends up on the plus side of the ledger—and can even show a profit on the rerouted *Zephyr* under the incentive payment structure if its on-time performance is good. (Judging from the "test train" Amtrak sent out on the route in place of the conventional consist last month [two F40 locomotives, a pair of baggage cars and 12 SuperLiners], timekeeping will apparently not be a problem unless considerable time is deleted from the schedule to provide Ogden arrivals and departures close to the present ones.) The Rio Grande is expected to retain the present RGZ equipment for its own seasonal ski trains as well (Aspen is conveniently close to Glenwood Springs).

Thus far, Wyoming, which stands to lose its hard-won passenger rail service, has not been heard from relative to Amtrak's plans to isolate the state. There is some speculation that, should the Congressional delegation from the Sagebrush State trumpet its 58,000 boarding passengers last year, a compromise might be arranged that would provide for alternate-day operation over either route between Denver and Ogden.

It is now a certainty that the *Rio Grande Zephyr* will join that long list of departed name-trains with the coming of Daylight time in April. Despite the overuse of the phraseology, this will truly be the "end of an era", as the last of a long line of varnish runs fades into retirement.

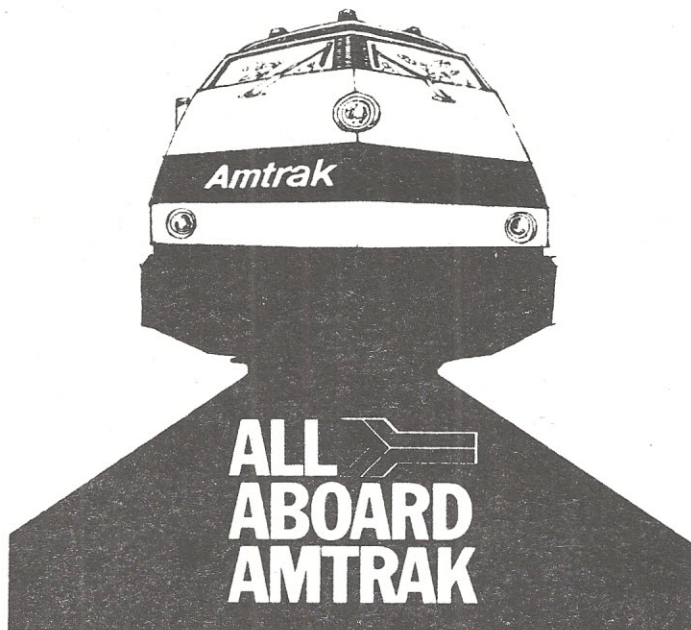
[Note: Best available information indicates that most, if not all, of the remaining trips of the RGZ between Denver and Salt Lake are already sold out, as rail buffs and others seek to ride before the Amtrak takeover. The one-way fare is \$81.35 Denver to Salt Lake City (above Amtrak's per-mile tariff); special family-fare rates are also available. Historical material on the Denver & Rio Grande Western excerpted from a Robert A. Le Massena text ©1971 by Lyman E. Cox.]

Denver Salt Lake City (Ogden)

Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad

READ DOWN			READ UP		
17	Train Number		18		
MoThSa	Frequency of Operation		Tu Fr Su		
☐ X ☐	Type of Service		☐ X ☐		
	km	Mi			
7 30A	0	0	Dp	Denver, CO (MT)	Ar 9 30P
9 55A	121	75		Granby, CO	6 50P
11 30A	208	129		Bond, CO	5 15P
1 10P	298	185		Glenwood Springs, CO	3 40P
1 40P	341	212		Rifle, CO	3 05P
2 55P	443	275	Ar	Grand Junction, CO	Dp 1 55P
3 10P	443	275	Dp		Ar 1 40P
④ 4 30P	568	353		Thompson, UT	④ 12 10P
④ 4 55P	612	380		Green River, UT	④ 11 40A
6 20P	726	451		Helper, UT	10 30A
8 25P	846	526		Provo, UT	8 20A
9 30P	917	570	Ar	Salt Lake City, UT -D&RGW Sta.	Dp 7 30A
9 40P	917	570	Dp	Salt Lake City, UT	Ar 7 20A
10 40P	977	607	Ar	Ogden, UT -Amtrak Sta. (MT)	Dp 6 30A

Note—D&RGW bus for train 18 departing Ogden will wait up to 15 minutes for passengers connecting from Amtrak Train 6, The San Francisco Zephyr, and Train 26, The Pioneer. In case of missed connection, passengers make own arrangements for alternate transportation.



All Aboard America

■ Amtrak has introduced another round of special discount fares, following up the success of the \$225 promotional tariff last year (see ad, back cover).

For the purpose of this special discount, which will be for sale until May 1, Amtrak has divided its nationwide route system into three regions. A round trip within one region is just \$125. A trip within two adjoining regions is \$225, and a cross-country trip covering three regions is \$299. One stopover, in addition to the destination, may be made in each direction, and the return trip may be made via a different route. Tickets are good for 30 days from the date of the first trip segment, but must be used by May 30.

The geographic regions under the plan are:

- Western: From West Coast points east to El Paso, Albuquerque, Denver and Wolf Point (MT).
- Central: From El Paso, Albuquerque, Denver and Wolf Point east to and including the *City of New Orleans* route between Chicago and New Orleans.
- Eastern: From and including the Chicago-New Orleans route east to such points as Montreal, New York and Miami.

"All Aboard America" fares make Amtrak particularly competitive with airlines for trips 800 to 1500 miles long. They are designed to appeal to all segments of the traveling public; college students, for example, will be able to avail themselves of the lowered fares for a trip during their spring break.

The new discount program has few restrictions, and has been designed for ease in understanding and use. Children's fares are exactly half the adult tariff for the corresponding region or regions.

Those passengers using the "All Aboard America" fares may obtain sleeping car space by paying the appropriate

accommodation charges. There are no blackout dates for holiday travel, although Easter falls within the discount fare period. Reservations and tickets for the entire trip must be obtained prior to departure, though reservations may be changed during the trip provided all fare rules are observed.

Amtrak Addenda

■ Amtrak has expanded its door-to-door Package Express nationwide. Amtrak Package Express, previously only available in the Northeast and parts of California, is now serving 55 major metropolitan areas.

Packages are carried aboard Amtrak's regularly scheduled intercity trains. Pick-ups and deliveries are made by independent trucking firms that have contracts with Amtrak. Fifty-one of the 55 cities are served by trucking firms that are members of the Film, Air and Package Carriers Conference, a trade group that helped arrange the end-point service.

■ The *Gulf Wind* may return: Early in January, Amtrak operated a test train over the Jacksonville-New Orleans (via Mobile) route where the L&N/Seaboard *Gulf Wind* held sway until May 1, 1971. This "missing link" in the pattern of nationwide rail services has long been proposed for reactivation, but the World's Fair to be held next year in New Orleans has given impetus to *Gulf Wind* restoral, at least over the New Orleans-Mobile segment of the former route. Financial support must be forthcoming from Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama for the train to become a reality; proponents of the service claim such 403(b) aid is possible to arrange.

In addition, the Florida Department of Transportation, pleased with the ridership on the Tampa-Miami *Silver Palm*, is attempting to secure funding from Tallahassee for the train's extension to Jacksonville to tie in with the rest of the Amtrak system and fill the gap in rail service in the south. Many obstacles remain to be overcome before a new *Gulf Wind* becomes a reality, but a real possibility exists that the package can be put together in time for the Fair.

■ The Altoona-Pittsburgh *Fort Pitt* disappeared late in January, a victim of low ridership. The train was essentially "extra duty" for the otherwise-idle consist of the *Pennsylvanian*, but even that financial plus was insufficient to keep the *Fort Pitt* running.

The FY 1984 Reagan budget presages a 4% cut in spending for Amtrak (as might be expected)—but a 37% hike in highway appropriations (as also might be expected). The Corporation would still have some \$676,000,000 to operate its basic system, but the Chicago-Cincinnati-Washington *Cardinal* is once again on the "hit list"—despite general willingness to spend at least \$25,000,000 on rehabilitating

the derelict Indianapolis-Cincinnati Conrail line for an extension of the *Hoosier State* from Indianapolis to the Queen City.

The same budget also calls for a change in funding of state-supported 403(b) trains. States would be required to put up the entire cost of the trains—which would most likely see the elimination of a clear majority of the runs.

■ In response to passenger comments (some of them unfavorable), Amtrak will begin offering new menus aboard its trains in late April . . . After a number of technical problems were resolved, Canadian-built LRC locomotives have been returned to the Chicago-Toronto *International*; they now alternate with Amtrak F40s as the original joint operating agreement had provided. ("Tempo" cars trail the LRCs in the consist of the VIA train; the Amtrak set uses conventional Amfleet units.) . . . The economy's doldrums have made an impact on Amtrak (as elsewhere); 25% of the Corporation's reservations personnel are on layoff, and riding is down systemwide . . . The new Ann Arbor (MI) station is now operational . . . A portion of the historic St. Louis Union station (the former baggage shed) may be used by Amtrak as its depot facility, replacing a "temporary" station currently in use because of the deteriorated condition of the landmark structure. After much foot-dragging and arm-waving, development of the station as a commercial center is underway, and backers of the project are anxious to see Amtrak return to the facility.

California Controversy

■ The "Battle of the Bullet" heats up: Protests by environmentalists and residents along the proposed route of the Los Angeles-San Diego high-speed train are forcing a serious review of the project. Biggest bone of contention is the fact that authorization for the project was given last August by the California legislature last fall without a full public hearing—providing for the issuance of \$1,250,000,000 in tax-free revenue bonds to the private corporation seeking to build the line.

Opponents of the project (quickly signed into law by former Governor Brown) insist they are not against the concept, but rather the manner in which it was approved—without, they say, details of the \$3,000,000,000 undertaking having been released for public scrutiny. (No exact routing, for example, has been made public—the alignment is to be "generally in the vicinity of the present Santa Fe rail route or along Interstate 5".

Other objections are the apparent lack of environmental safeguards, Japanese participation in the project, and doubts about its ability to support itself without public subsidies. Opponents contend the project will divert money that could better be spent on improving existing Amtrak service.

The American High Speed Rail Corporation, backer of the project, is basically an offshoot of Amtrak—and received

some \$750,000 in "seed money" from the Corporation. Its Japanese-built trains would make about 45 round trips a project, is basically an offshoot of Amtrak—and received some \$750,000 in "seed money" from the Corporation. Its Japanese-built trains would make about 45 round-trips a day, carrying in excess of 20,000,000 passengers each year after the line begins operation in 1988. The trip would take less than an hour each way on express runs, or about 90 minutes on multi-stop locals.

A one-way ticket would cost about \$30 in 1983 dollars. Amtrak, a part owner of the project, has licensed the new operation, and will handle reservations and some other ancillary services.

Railway Report

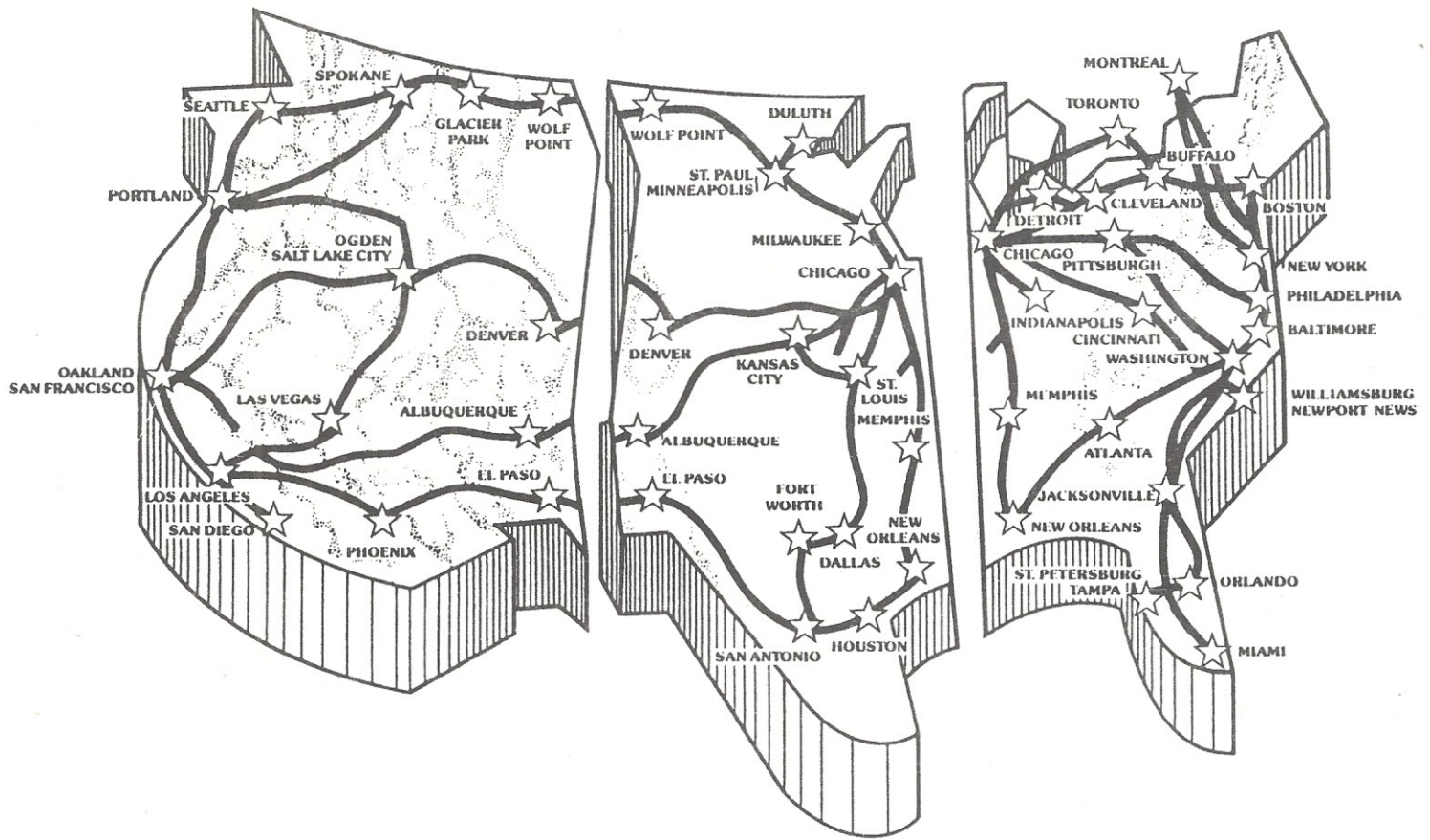
■ In the nine months since the restored *Orient Express* began its two weekly round trips between London and Venice in the grand manner, more than 20,000 people have paid more than \$400 apiece for the journey through Europe. The *Orient Express* can accommodate 196 passengers and must operate at 70 percent of capacity to show a profit; thus far it has averaged slightly over that, and there are more than 7,000 advance bookings for the remainder of this year.

■ The new Secretary of Transportation, Elizabeth Dole, has announced an agreement with Amtrak for funding the redevelopment of Washington Union Station. The estimated \$70,000,000 in rehabilitation costs will come from existing DOT and Amtrak funds. Under the plan, basic rail passenger facilities at Union Station will be restored. The project also includes development opportunities for retail shops and other commercial activities.

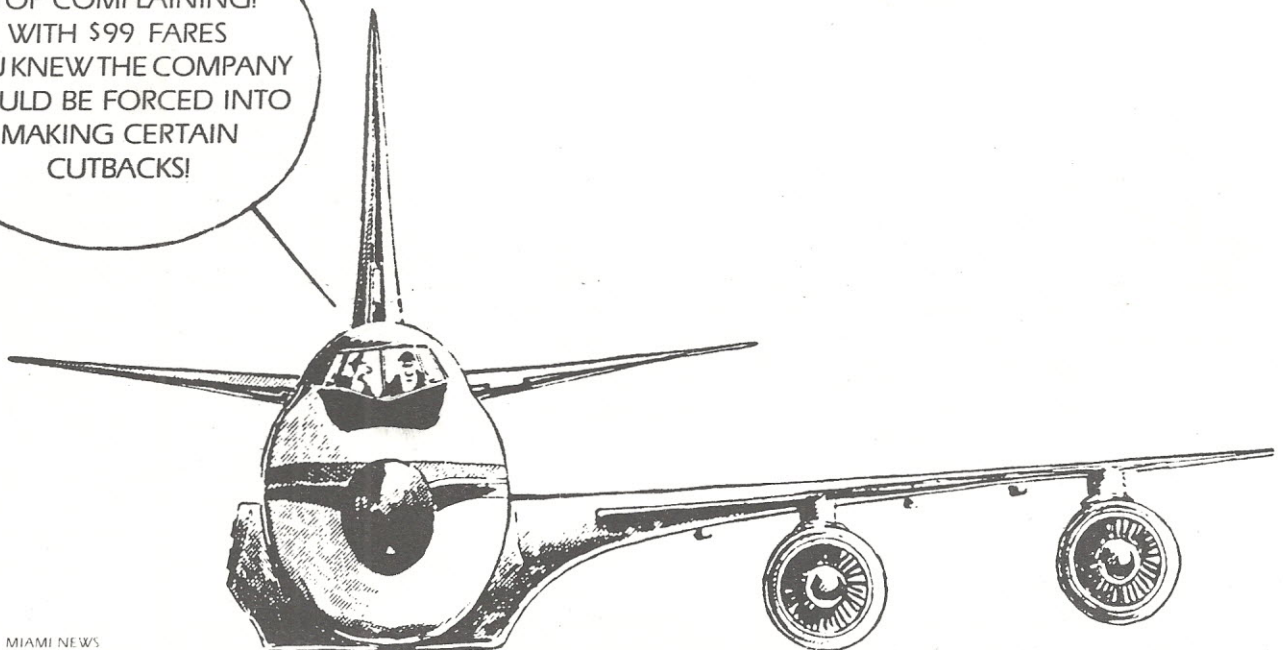
■ Intercity rail patronage in Canada last year was down by over a million riders from the previous year, largely due to the 20% cut in VIA service in November 1981. The ridership drop represents the first in VIA's six-year history. More cutbacks appear to be in the offing to shore up the ailing carrier . . . On the other hand, there is a possibility of improved Edmonton-Calgary service beginning in the near future as a one-year experiment.

■ The White Pass & Yukon, in the throes of its own economic problems, will not resume its excursion passenger service this year . . . However, the Georgia Railroad mixed-train service continues, pending an April decision by the Georgia Public Service Commission on its fate.

■ A \$1,500,000 federal grant is being sought by the city of Nashville to shore up its historic Union Station to prevent further deterioration. A mayoral task force is seeking estimates from developers on the cost of renovating the old depot (which saw its last passenger train in 1981), now the property of the General Services Administration .



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 WITH \$99 FARES
 YOU KNEW THE COMPANY
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 MAKING CERTAIN
 CUTBACKS!



AT DEADLINE

■ **AIRLINE ACTION:** Beginning April 2, American Airlines will reduce the number of fare plans it offers to only four: first class, coach, off-peak discount and Super Saver. A "yield curve" will set the rates, with passengers paying more per mile for short flights than for long ones, or 53 cents per mile for under 250 miles, down to 15 cents per mile for trips in excess of 2,500 miles. By way of example, under the new tariffs, the one-way coach fare between Chicago and Phoenix (a distance of 1,442 miles) will increase to \$327 (from \$306), while the one-way Chicago-San Francisco rate will drop from \$394 to \$378. American says 720 of its coach fares will decrease under the new tariff schedule, while 543 will increase. As expected, carriers flying the same routes hastened to match the new rate schedule in whole or in part.

□ **Embattled Braniff,** which saw the last of its Byzantine plans to "merge" with PSA dashed by a federal appeals court in New Orleans earlier this month, has signed a pact with People Express (the Newark-based discount airline) for the purchase of 20 of Braniff's idled 727-200s. The package includes a proposal to lease a 747-200, for People to use on its planned Newark-London route. People will take delivery on the 727s between November 1983 and March 1985, although up to six might arrive in summer if traffic demands warrant.

Earlier this month, People arranged financing for the purchase of five 737-200s from CP Air; the budget carrier now operates 21 of the smaller jets, serving 16 cities with no-frills flights. People Express plans to use its fleet additions to add flights to existing routes and expand service over the next two years. Braniff will still own 31 727-200s after the People Express sale, and will provide continuing maintenance services to the budget airline. The Dallas-based carrier, grounded since last May, had hoped to peddle some of its assets to San Diego's PSA, so that carrier could form a Texas division out of the ruins of Braniff.

After the failure of the final PSA plan to secure court approval, Braniff began to map a reorganization plan for the bankrupt carrier that stops just short of total liquidation. If the federal bankruptcy court approves the proposal in April, Braniff would shed all of its assets related to flying, and form a small concern that would provide ground service and contract maintenance for other air carriers. Its creditors would get about 60 cents on the dollar.

□ **Equipment Eclectica:** Japan Air Lines has ordered two 747-300s from Boeing . . . The FAA has certified Boeing's largest jetliner, the 747-300 for commercial flight service after four months of tests. Principal difference in the new jumbo jet is the extension of the upper deck 23 feet to provide additional passenger seating . . . PSA is delaying delivery of four DC-9 Super 80 jets from McDonnell Douglas until next year, citing a drop-off in traffic . . . Michigan-based Simmons Airlines has placed its first 36-passenger Shorts 360 aircraft into service; a second is on order for imminent delivery . . . McDonnell Douglas is starting construction on an extended range model of its DC-9 Super 80 jet, to be called the Super 83. It will be capable of flying up to 2950 miles with 155 passengers, an increase in range of 35% over existing Super 80s . . . The last Boeing 727, the company's 1832nd unit, will roll off the Seattle production line (destined for Federal Express) in September 1984. The 727 was first introduced in 1963, and potential sales were estimated at 300.

□ **Route Report:** Simmons Airlines will replace Republic at Chippewa County International Airport (Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan) April 24 . . . Japan Air Lines and United begin Chicago-Tokyo service next month, JAL on April 1 and UAL the following day. Making its Chicago debut, JAL will leave O'Hare for Tokyo via Seattle three times each week. United will service the route daily, six days a week via Seattle, once weekly (Tuesday) via Portland . . . Commuter flights between Albuquerque and Las Cruces operated by Airways of New Mexico will end

AT DEADLINE

April 1 because of poor ridership . . . Air Florida begins service from Miami to Madrid, Zurich, Frankfurt and Dusseldorf in May.

On May 15, American will begin pool service with Alaska Airlines from Washington via Chicago and Seattle to Anchorage. AA crews will operate the 727 to Sea-Tac, where Alaska personnel will take over . . . Pan Am plans international service expansion from Chicago to Zagreb, Dubrovnik, Milan, Brussels, Stuttgart, Beirut, Seoul and Taipei beginning April 24 . . . Frontier is suspending service to the Mexican cities of Ixtapa, Guadalajara, and Manzanillo May 1, at the end of the peak travel season . . . Continental begins service to Jackson (MS) in May . . . American begins daily nonstop service between Dallas/Fort Worth and Atlanta, and between DFW and Houston's Hobby Airport April 24.

■ **TRANSIT TALK:** The Los Angeles-Oxnard commuter service, finally begun after four years of effort on the part of the California Department of Transportation, is gone, a victim of an intramural fight between CalTrans and contractor Southern Pacific. Service began October 18, 1982, and soon was averaging about 1200 riders a day (the stated goal was about 2500). Amtrak equipment was used (an abortive attempt was made to operate six leased Chicago RTA bilevel coaches, but failed because of the lack of locomotives with HEP), but the Corporation otherwise was not involved. SP wanted \$580,000 per month to operate the service; CalTrans offered \$70,000. The dispute wound up in court, and when the Interstate Commerce Commission ruled in SP's favor, the railroad promptly and unilaterally dropped the runs early in February. (They had been on newly elected Governor George Deukmejian's hit list anyway—along with the Los Angeles-Sacramento "Spirit of California" and the pair of Oakland-Bakersfield "San Joaquins", which are expected to disappear in July).

□ The Chicago Transit Authority began revenue service to the O'Hare Extension's temporary River Road terminal in the wee hours of Sunday, February 27, as expected—using a pair of 1969-vintage Budd-built cars (2221-2222) that had not seen the wash rack in some time and which lacked at least one seat and some lights, sadly not untypical of today's rapid transit system . . . Virtually all of the former Conrail commuter services in the New York and Philadelphia areas are still out on strike as of this writing (March 25) . . . Four of San Francisco's cable cars, displaced from regular service by a two-year complete system rehabilitation, are on display at various sites in the area; the remainder are stored at Pier 70. Service is set to resume in June 1984 . . . Hawker-Siddeley Canada and the Ontario-owned Urban Transportation Development Corporation have formed a joint venture to manufacture urban passenger rail cars; HS is currently building 71 bilevel cars for GO Transit.

□ In St. Louis, a long-awaited rail commuter system for the city could get \$2,000,000 in federal funds for engineering studies. A transit committee's voted to apply for the funding heralds a new stage in transit planning that has continued intermittently here since 1898 . . . Indianapolis Metro Transit has chosen the site of the former Marmon-Herrington trolley coach factory on Washington Street (a short distance from Metro's present facility) as its new maintenance base; Metro's present shops must close to make way for a state park. The same property is placing 50 Orion 35-foot transit coaches in service beginning in April. . . . Yet another transit property has acquired rubber-tired "streetcars" for downtown special services. San Antonio's VIA Metropolitan Transit will operate 20 of the Chance-built vehicles on the downtown "El Centro" route. VIA's "streetcar" is antique green in color, with gold pinstriping and brassplated fittings. The car is highlighted with wood fittings, including highly polished and varnished oak seats. The "streetcar" is an accurate replica of cars in use on the streets of San Antonio in the last years of that property's electric rail operations.