

## REPRIEVE FOR MARYLEBONE

On 30th April 1986 a short note from the Press Association announced that British Rail had abandoned its proposals to close Marylebone station, together with the lines to Harrow and Northolt Junction, and decided instead to find other ways of reducing the losses on this line.

The ostensible reason for this decision was that, since announcement of closure proposals in the autumn of 1984, traffic on the L.R.T. line out of Baker Street to Amersham and Aylesbury had increased, due to the popularity of Travelcards and Capitalcards, to such an extent that closure of the Marylebone service was now operationally impractical.

Whilst this may have come as a surprise to many, it certainly did not to the London & Home Counties Branch of RDS who, in its submission of early 1985 to the London Regional Passengers Committee (L.R.P.C.), sought to prove that, were the proposal to be implemented, the limited number of rush hour paths into Baker Street would have meant no seats for some displaced passengers north of Harrow, while some existing passengers south of Harrow may not have been able to get on to the train at all - causing extreme hardship to all concerned. In the event, our arguments have not had to be put to the test.

Back in 1982 Great Yarmouth Borough Council sought to challenge the closure of the Wensum Curve (a short line which enabled trains from London to avoid Norwich and proceed directly to the coastal resorts). What you may ask, has this to do with the Marylebone closure proposals? The answer is simple. Perseverance - on the part of RDS, its branches, associated users groups and, latterly, more enlightened Local Authorities who have effectively mobilised all the resources available, including legal knowledge and expertise, in the fight for a fairer deal for rail users.

Whilst Great Yarmouth Borough Council was unsuccessful in preventing closure of the Wensum Curve, the experience it gained gave other Local Authorities a wider knowledge of this rather specialised area of administrative law. Thus justice was achieved where, in the past, it had possibly been denied. Even

the preliminary stages of the Settle - Carlisle closure were affected when it was discovered that B.R. had not strictly complied with the Transport Act (1962) in notifying potential objectors. The decision of Brent L.B.C., G.L.C. and other local boroughs, at the meeting on 30th January 1985, to challenge L.R.P.C.'s Inquiry procedures in the Courts may not have happened had the knowledge and expertise not been available.

RDS (and its former constituent bodies) have been seeking to widen the scope of the T.U.C.C. procedure ever since Ernest Marples's Transport Act of 1962 restricted objectors to questions of "hardship", no doubt to facilitate the massive Beeching closure plans which were to follow. Whilst we were not able to secure much needed improvements through Parliament during the passage of last year's Transport Bill - despite a concerted effort with the AMA/ACC and a consortium of other interest groups - this effort may not have been in vain. Although a number of battles may have been lost it could be argued that overall the war has been won.

The G.L.C. may have been destroyed but without its initiative at Brent in 1985 and the subsequent Court hearings which ensued throughout that year the outcome may well have been very different and the Boroughs concerned (Harrow, Ealing, Hillingdon - particularly Brent and not forgetting the support of Bucks. C.C.) have certainly written another Chapter in this continuing saga.

Whether B.R. (and for that matter the Government) will at last see the folly of continual cuts and closures only time will tell but with Settle - Carlisle up for decision during the runup to a General Election perhaps more enlightened policies may prevail.

Now that the closure of Marylebone has been averted it behoves all concerned to concentrate on the development and exploitation of its potential. At the Branch's A.G.M. at the House of Commons in November 1984, our Sponsor, Nigel Spearing MP, suggested it might usefully make a terminal for steam hauled specials - certainly B.R. should at least look at this idea - and we have no doubt that the local groups representing users at the country end of the line (at both High Wycombe and Ayles-

bury) will waste no time in putting forward constructive proposals.

A more positive approach to railway development is what is required not continual retrenchment of the kind we have experienced for over 20 years. As Ken Shaw said at the end of his article on Marylebone in our July 1985 issue (Railwatch No. 24, p2, col 1) "Any Volunteers" to write the next Chapter of the saga.

JWB

## THE BATTLE TO SAVE SETTLE-CARLISLE

What is it about the Settle to Carlisle line that has made its closure one of the most hotly contested proposals for many years? Certainly when the BRB took its decision many years ago to close the line the closure was viewed as an "open and shut" case. By re-routing the Inter-City services, reducing the service to two poorly timed trains a day, closing most of the intermediate stations, and so on, BR paved the way to an easy closure.

So what has gone wrong? There are four main reasons why the closure of the Settle to Carlisle line is proving so difficult for BR. They are:-

- (a) The development of Dalesrail. This scheme has been so successful that it points the way to the future development of the line;
- (b) The appointment of Mr Ron Cotton as Project Manager, Settle Carlisle. Mr Cotton was described by the "Times" as a "marketing wizard". It takes real ability to turn an apology of a service into a money spinner to the extent that the line is now making an operating profit;
- (c) The role of the line as a diversionary route for the West Coast Main Line and the lack of suitable alternatives;
- (d) The formation of a well organized campaign against closure. The Settle Carlisle Joint Action Committee (JAC), originally an alliance of the RDS, T2000 and FOCSLA, has been expanded into a limited company and its membership increased to include parish councils, chambers of trade, other local/national amenity and environmental groups. The campaign can claim to have aroused

public awareness to such an extent that a record 22000 people have objected to the closure.

Few politicians locally or nationally can afford to ignore the Settle to Carlisle line.

The T.U.C.C. hearings into the proposed closure have now taken place. During the hearings the JAC has presented evidence lasting over 9 hours on all aspects of the closure proposal. For example Chris Wallis, of Barmouth viaduct fame, suggested that BR could repair Ribbleshead for much less than the £2.6 million quoted by them.

Much of the JAC's evidence was centred around two main publications. These are:-

(i) "Re-Training the Settle to Carlisle"  
A report by TEST which examines the economic case for the line. The report suggests that with the right management and a mix of Inter-City and local services the line could easily be profitable and pay for the remedial work needed to structures such as Ribbleshead;

(ii) "New Life in the Hills"  
This is a report by Jonathan Roberts of Transport 2000 and examines the case for local station re-openings and for new local services on the Settle - Carlisle and Blackburn - Hellifield lines. The report criticises the past mismanagement of the line which led to closure of local services. It calls for the immediate re-opening of stations like Armthwaite, Lazonby, Langwathby, Kirkby Stephen, Garsdale, Horton in Ribblesdale and so on. Others could follow, and three new stations are proposed.

(Both reports are available from the S/C JAC, price £5.00 post free. Address: White Cross, Lancaster, Lancashire, LA1 4XH).

In the weeks before the T.U.C.C. reports are issued and the Minister makes his decision the JAC intends to maintain the momentum of the campaign. A series of public meetings are planned starting on Saturday 7th June in Hawes which will push the case for the re-opening of Garsdale station. Other events are being planned and the JAC will be meeting the Minister to present him with its evidence.

Further details are available from R.Watts, 15, Stanley Avenue, PENWORTHAM, PR1 9RB (Tel: 0772 743371).

Richard Watts

## WANTED - URGENT

Member with graphic skills to finalise publicity material for RDS printing. London area or Surrey preferred. Phone Roland White - 01-661 2290.

# A.G.M. REPORT

## Chairman's Message

Following my election as Chairman at the recent A.G.M. held in Cardiff I am pleased to pen this initial message to all our members and supporters.

This year began well with Government agreement for our long sought Channel Rail Tunnel, the introduction of much-needed new "Sprinter" trains and good progress being made with East Coast electrification. These and many other developments certainly justify our persistent efforts to secure a better deal for our railways. There is no doubt that, without the continuing public concern and pressure for the retention and development of rail services, the network and infrastructure would have suffered far more.

Our most valuable asset is the individual member. The membership not only

enables our essential lobbying to continue, but also ensures that we maintain our grass roots involvement. As always, more members are essential - so please secure your new recruit to RDS soon.

As most of you will know, my base is in the Midlands, where I have been active since the mid 1960's, serving as Secretary and, latterly Branch Chairman. Our new National Executive provides a good geographical representation and, along with our new General Secretary, Trevor Garrod, and our soon-to-be-appointed Administrative Officer, we aim to improve our efficiency, expertise and effectiveness in pursuing the many goals ahead of us.

We can succeed; we must succeed.

Alan Bevan, A.H.  
Chairman

## Dr. Caton Bows Out

At this year's RDS Annual General Meeting, Dr Michael Caton left his post in a mood of cautious optimism. In his farewell address he said that strikes and industrial action of all kinds on the railways had, of late, been low, while investment was high. Lines and stations had opened or been improved, while the decision to go ahead with the Channel Tunnel had been taken. But said Dr Caton, in spite of these causes for optimism, we should be cautious and never lose sight of the reasons why we were pressing for rail development - improvements in both the environment and the safety of travellers. The few fatalities which occurred each year from terrorism and industrial incidents were given prominence in the press, while 5000 deaths a year on the roads were played down. The attainable improvement in passenger safety by rail development surely justified investment which would not give a return on "economic" grounds - particularly as company cars were heavily subsidised.

Our population was becoming diffuse, which was not conducive to public transport, and the effects of this on the environment were particularly serious. Parts of London were already spreading in "mini Los Angeles" fashion, while there was even now, pressure for development in the green belt area around the M25. Rail was a means to counter this - as PART of a transport structure plan, not an optional extra.

The means for bringing about rail

expansion were not being provided. We expected a 19th century railway to run 20th century trains in competition with 20th century motorways. Government were mistaken to rely on market competition; rail and road did not compete in the same way as two neighbouring greengrocers. A major shortcoming was in the provision of private sidings of which, for example, we had only one tenth as many as the French. Such sidings could take a considerable load from the motorways, while cross-rail links should be developed as an answer to such road schemes as the M25.

Finally, Dr Caton said that many positive developments had been due to hard work by members, branches and users' groups, for whose dedication we were thankful. RDS was now enjoying increased standing - for instance Mr Mitchell had approached us for a discussion on the Channel Tunnel. To continue to develop and be successful in our aims it was necessary for us to think more strategically, to work together as a team and, finally, to take a lead from the road lobby's book and make sure that we get the right people in the right places.

After the Chairman had stood down, Steve Wilkinson, the Vice-Chairman, thanked him for persevering in the face of both infighting within the Society and "out-fighting" (in the columns of enthusiast magazines by some members and ex-members of RDS).

K.W.

## Growth in the Cardiff Valleys

The guest speaker at this year's RDS A.G.M. was Mr Jones, B.R. Manager responsible for operation of the Cardiff Valley services, who spoke of the B.R. strategy for revival of rail passenger services in that area.

Mr Jones started by reminding the meeting of the scale of operation in the valleys. Serving a catchment area of half a million people, with 25,000 passenger journeys a day on 200 trains running between 53 stations, this network was one of the largest in Great Britain outside London and the P.T.E. areas.

The valley services had survived Beeching - largely due to the presence of the coal industry and, furthermore, roads in the area were not much competition in terms of punctuality. Up until 1982 there had, however, been a decline in both traffic and staff morale. Rolling stock was reaching the end of its working life and singling had made inroads at Borth and Treherbert. Operating Costs were rising while local employment levels were falling.

Against this background, an attempt was made, starting in 1982, to inject enthusiasm and to improve services by means of businesslike methods (which eventually won B.R. an award for the best marketing business in Wales). Authority to run the services passed to the Area Manager, business sectors were created and management generally became more dynamic. South Glamorgan and Mid-Glamorgan County Councils were fully supportive of rail development, particularly with regard to such projects as park and ride, station refurbishment and new stations (that at Ynysybryn has achieved in one year the traffic increases projected in five).

A fares strategy, designed to encourage increased revenue, (which actually increased by 14% in 1985, despite lower fares) reduced fares and enabled a more rapid response to changing market demands. As a result of considerable market research the brand name "Valley Lines" was adopted. Fare reductions were found to be newsworthy in themselves and led to publicity in the local press. Improved service intervals of half an hour were introduced on the Penarth and Barry Lines. Industrial relations took a new turn as workers, hitherto used only to cuts, divined that management were succeeding and cooperated with the new moves - in spite of some staff losses.

Future expansion under consideration is the opening of the freight-only Aberdare line to passenger traffic (with four stations), three new stations on the Radyr line, new stations at Eastbrook, Ynyswen, Bargoed and Thornhill,

together with new park and ride facilities at 13 stations. Sprinters are due to replace the ageing DMU fleet this year, while open stations and on-train ticket sales are on the increase.

On the negative side, vandalism had been the largest single problem but, police had done a good job - literally hundreds of offenders had been apprehended and this activity had at last fallen off on the Aberdare branch.

Future competition may come from bus deregulation and the opening of the A4070 Abercynon - Merthyr road. Things were going to get interesting in the valleys, Mr Jones said, but B.R. were planning to counter this competition.

The speaker answered questions from the floor. Among several interesting points in his answers it emerged that much thought was being given to overcoming the problems of the "Prime User" cost formula in opening the Aberdare line to passenger traffic (if this problem can be sensibly overcome here then there could be major implications for other re-openings). Electrification or light rail would, probably, not get far in the planning stage due to investment costs. Besides which, were some lines to be electrified and not others, operational flexibility would be lost. Reading between the lines in the answer to another question it appears that the valley services are seen by B.R. as being a totally separate operation from Inter City, even though they contribute business to it.

The meeting thanked Mr Jones for his talk and the ensuing question and answer session, which had certainly shown what could be achieved by a positive attitude to rail development.

K.W.

## East Anglian Branch

Following the election of Trevor Garrod as RDS General Secretary, the new Branch Secretary is John Brodribb, 12 Kemps Lane, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 9XA (Tel. 716961)

The Autumn Meeting of the Branch is to be held on Saturday 20th September at 2.0 p.m. in the Assembly House, Theatre Street, Norwich.

On Saturday 4th October a special train will run from Colchester, Ipswich, Bury St. Edmunds and intermediate stations to the Severn Valley Railway. SAE to Lewis Buckingham, 25, Drury Road, Colchester, Essex, CO2 7UY for details

Trevor Garrod

## N.C.I.T.: 'Reduce Dependence on Motorised Transport'

The National Council on Inland Transport, at its A.G.M. earlier this year, passed the following resolution:

"That this A.G.M., being concerned with the adverse effects on the quality of life of the ever increasing dependence on motorised transport requests the Secretary of State to study and implement all possible ways to reduce that dependence."

In a forceful speech moving her resolution Mrs. R. Colyer referred to the serious impact of the growing number of fatal and serious accidents, the congestion in towns and villages, that those without cars, or too old or young to drive, were becoming second class citizens. She asked that a study be made, at top level, inviting all who wished to give evidence to do so, and that the study should, amongst other matters, cover:

- Better rail connections to enable tourists to reach places of interest without cars.
- Reconnection of rail lines to seaside resorts.
- Land losses due to road and motorway construction.
- Cost comparison between road and rail construction and maintenance.
- Influence of forecast on car ownership level.
- Need for re-opening of rail lines, and more rail freight.

Ruth Colyer. (N.C.I.T.)

## RDS Appointments 1986/7

CHAIRMAN: A. Bevan, 12 Morris Field Croft, Hall Green, Birmingham, B28 0RN  
VICE-CHAIRMAN: S.F. Wilkinson, 52 Manor Park, Histon, Cambridge, CB4 4JT

GENERAL SECRETARY: T.J. Garrod, 15 Clapham Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1RQ

TREASURER: R. Wilson, 9 Dutton Drive, Bebington, Merseyside, L63 9AE

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: F. Hastilow, 21 Norfolk Road, Sutton Coldfield, B75 6SQ

SALES OFFICER: G. Kent, 35A Clarendon Road, Luton, Beds. LU2 7PQ

Other members of the National Executive elected at the A.G.M. are:-  
J.W. Barfield, L.J. Boylett,  
M.G. Crowhurst, L.I. Elias, R. Hulse,  
A. Macfarlane, J. Saunders, F.G. Tomlins,  
P. Wakefield and G. Wyatt.

## Icknield Branch

A.G.M. Report: The Committee is unchanged. Tel 0235 816547 for details.

Branch Meetings are at Marylebone Station buffet, 13.00 - 2nd Saturday in each month.

## MEMBERS' PLATFORM

### User's Right to Information

Sir,  
After struggling for 17/18 months I have established the basic principle, with B.R. and the T.U.C.C.N.W., that information centres etc., should provide information. During this period it has become apparent that the competence and credibility of the T.U.C.C.N.W. have left much to be desired, certainly prior to the appointment of the present secretary.

In view of the chaos that surrounded the first efforts of B.R. to close the Settle - Carlisle line and the proven incompetence of the T.U.C.C.N.W., it is felt that those connected with opposition to this closure should be made aware of this fact. I am enclosing just two copy letters which may be of interest to you. I can, of course, provide a mass of support correspondence if required.

E.Ratcliffe,  
Swinton,  
Manchester

(The nub of Mr Ratcliffe's correspondence was that he wished to travel from Manchester to Harwich to connect with morning sailings there. B.R. enquiry staff in Manchester always insisted on routing him via London, even though he knew, from personal experience, that there was a faster and cheaper route (involving two changes of train) via Retford and Peterborough. B.R. at first refused to accept the principle that enquiry staff should give information about a route by which the passenger wished to travel, rather than by the route which they felt that the passenger should take. Eventually B.R. conceded this point. When Mr Ratcliffe wrote to the T.U.C.C., expecting support in his case, he found that that body sided with B.R. in the matter and claims that, during the course of several letters from him, either failed to respond to points made by him or gave misleading or erroneous answers. ED).

### Highway Robbery

Sir,  
Several years ago RDS published a leaflet entitled "Stop This Highway Robbery Now". It highlighted one of the most powerful arguments in favour of higher rail subsidies, or reduced motoring subsidies, namely that there was a vast, invisible, supply of public money into motoring. Unfortunately, the argument collapsed because the exact amounts of invisible subsidy and the sources of information were not given. The inside pages of the leaflet merely

quoted a few local examples of cost.

In the run up to the next election, this issue of subsidy to different modes is likely to emerge in public debate. Many people are still completely unaware of the large hidden subsidies to motoring and still feel that road tax is unfairly high. There is a need for RDS members to be able to quote hard facts and sources with confidence, both in public debate and with their M.P.'s. They need data on the following areas of public spending: road construction, repair, policing, cost of deaths to productivity, cost of accidents to D.H.S.S., cost of car parking and of tax benefits to the commercial vehicle. It would be very impressive to be able to assemble an account for road and rail subsidies in *Railwatch* in preparation for the next election.

yours sincerely,

J. Evans  
Uxbridge  
Middlesex

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor will consider for publication letters and articles (such as the above). Any opinions expressed, however, must not be taken as necessarily reflecting the official views of the Society. The Editor also reserves the right to make "cuts" and other alterations which retain the sense of the original copy.

We are always pleased to receive good quality black & white prints of subjects of interest to members for inclusion in the journal.

### Singling

Sir,  
As a recent recruit to the RDS I read my first copy of "Railwatch" with considerable interest.

This happened to be the issue in which Dr John Marek had done an "extensive" investigation into the problems which would arise if B.R. were to single the Wrexham - Chester line.

I was particularly interested to read the words of Dr Marek (who is an M.P. sponsored by the NUR) since a few days beforehand, I had read, in a certain *Rail Enthusiasts* magazine, that this same Dr Marek had urged people in the area not to travel by train as a protest against the singling proposal by B.R.

R.J. Powell  
Chepstow  
Gwent

### R.T.S.C. Seminar

A Seminar on the theme: City Transport - Future Developments for Rapid Transit Systems, will be held at the Gt. Northern Hotel King's Cross, London, on Saturday 25th October. Speakers will include:- Mr D.Howard; Director of Tyne & Wear Metro; A.C.Clarke of the Docklands Light Railway and J.Gent of London Regional Transport.

A Prospectus may be obtained by sending a foolscap SAE to the Conference Secretary, R.T.S.C., 206, Alexandra Park Road, London N22 4UQ

### Barmouth Beetle Beaten

Amidst great celebrations on Sunday 13th April two class 37 locomotives were the first to cross Barmouth's famous viaduct since the Pwllheli goods in March 1980.



(Above) BRIGHTENING BAKER STREET

A facelift is transforming the stations of London's Underground. Baker Street, a century-old station, is now one of the brightest. Sodium lamps now light the shafts which once looked out on the sky. (G.L.C.)

(Facing page)

### WAYS TO WIN PASSENGERS

One of the last public appearances of GLC transport chief Dave Wetzel was to unveil this plaque, to mark the opening of a much improved walkway linking the two parts of Waterloo Station. Make it more attractive and more people will use them, said Dave Wetzel. (G.L.C.)

### WOMEN VOTE FOR RAIL

A recent nation-wide Gallup poll among a representative sample of over 1000 women revealed an overwhelming preference for rail transport.

The survey commissioned by Paragon Communications, and reported in "Business Travel Weekly" No. 15, 21 February 1986, shows a marked degree of confidence in rail travel, with six out of ten women expressing the view that trains should come first for business journeys. This was almost three times the number who thought air travel should be encouraged, and four times the number who opted for the car. Only five per cent favoured coach travel.

Train travel was regarded as by far the least stressful of the transport options. Only six per cent of women interviewed said trains were stressful, while the largest number considered cars to be so. (39%). A third of women rated airlines as the most stressful form of transport, while more than one in five pointed to the coach.

The age of enlightenment is not yet entirely with us, and irrationality still plays a large part in personal transport choice. Paradoxically the survey also revealed that the car is, nevertheless, used for most leisure and business journeys in the U.K.

Geoffrey Roper

(Below)

### WELDING THE RAILS IN DOCKLAND

A joint is being heated by oxy-acetylene equipment on the approach road to the maintenance depot at Poplar - a central point on the Docklands Light Railway. A conductor rail will be attached later to the sleepers. The main running tracks are far to the left. In the distance, looking towards Island Gardens, can be faintly seen the modern Billingsgate fish market, which replaced the old one in 1980. (D.L.R.)



## Glasgow Link now in Draft Plan

R.D.S. (Scotland), since its inception, has agitated with little respite for a link using the freight-only line over the St. Enoch's Bridge. This link, which would unify the Strathclyde PTE rail network, is now shown in the District Council's Draft Local Plan - the first visible indication of the possible success of the campaign. Although the Regional, rather than the District, Council would have the major responsibility for the project, both are of the same political complexion so there is hope that the link will eventually be inserted.

Frank Neville

## Change and Interchange around Nottingham

Tickets please! Though the Notts. & Derbys. tramway system is long since defunct, the cry of the tram conductor that formed the title of D.H. Lawrence's short story should be heard frequently in the future on BR trains just a mile downhill from the author's Eastwood birthplace. Where the Erewash Valley main line from Nottingham to Sheffield crosses the erstwhile tram route at Langley Mill, BR have constructed a new station with concrete platforms and an adjacent car park. This replaces the facilities demolished years ago when local services were withdrawn. Since then Alfreton has reopened as a Parkway station for Mansfield, Dronfield reopened in 1981, and in May 1986 local services were restored, using new "Sprinter" DMUs. Seven services run each weekday from Nottingham, calling at Beeston, Langley Mill, Alfreton, Chesterfield and Dronfield en route for Sheffield, and five continue to Rotherham, Wakefield Westgate and Leeds, giving long-overdue improvements on this axis.

Although the number of through trains to St. Pancras from the Erewash Valley is reduced to two return trips daily (all of which call at the unstaffed Langley Mill) there is a new cross-country train from Liverpool to Yarmouth on this route, and the Blackpool to Cambridge working is diverted to form a second daily boat train to Harwich. Altogether the Erewash Valley service is a vast improvement on the previous haphazard timetable.

Other "Sprinter" services based on Nottingham and Derby have been modified to give a basic two-hourly frequency between Crewe and Grantham, and Birmingham and Lincoln. The Nottingham to Derby combined service is thus hourly, with extras at peak times, and extra trains are also run from Derby to Crewe and from Nottingham to Lincoln. A welcome feature is an earlier start to the Sunday services on the Nottingham to Derby, Nottingham to Grantham and Derby to Matlock lines which gives more scope for day trips to

attractions such as Matlock Bath.

Malcolm Goodall

## Merseyside faces Bus Competition whilst raising fares

As a result of the abolition of Merseyside County Council, fares on Merseyrail were increased by 40% on 27th April. Bus fares, on the other hand, were only increased by 15% and a spokesperson for the new Joint Board stated that the reason for this apparent anomaly is that "generally, the unemployed and those on low incomes are more prone to using the buses than the trains. Therefore bus fares must be kept as low as economically possible". The PTA also says that bus services will be cut in June, to be followed by further cuts and fare increases when the Transport Act comes into force in October.

From October, Class 142 "Pacers" are to be introduced on the Liverpool - St. Helens Shaw Street - Wigan North Western service. Trains will run from Lime Street on a 20-minute frequency, with one train per hour extended to Preston. This new service innovation will undoubtedly compete more than adequately with any private bus operator who may appear on the scene as a result of the Transport Act, though there may well be some disappointment from the fact that Class 150 "Sprinters" will not be used as originally announced.

The good medium and long distance news is that from the commencement of the 1986 timetable, Sheffield, Yarmouth and Dover are new destinations served direct from Liverpool, together with an additional morning train to Portsmouth Harbour.

Mike Breslin

## Derwent Society may buy trains if BR won't hire them

Since the end of 1983 the Derwent Railway Society has organized 21 special trains and its excursions have gained increased support and popularity as they became more widely known. It has unfortunately not been found possible to arrange a programme of excursions for 1986 because the local management of BR are now unable to provide trains to hire. The Maryport to Carlisle section has limited clearances which rule out locomotive hauled stock, and the permitted railcars have to be fitted with bars across their opening windows. The small and decreasing number of suitable sets based on Carlisle leaves no spares for hire on weekdays, and extra costs would be incurred if the line were to be specially opened on Sundays.

The Society has asked BR to investigate the possibility of its outright purchase of a suitable railcar for its own use, but has met with little response. It is possible to run locomotive-hauled trains south

from Maryport, but it is difficult to obtain one of the few sets of carriages available for charter use and the empty stock has to be run via Carnforth and Barrow in both directions. The considerable mileage of empty stock running is reflected in the charge for the train, which is higher per seat than that which would be levied for a railcar.

In 1985 BR cut down its own advertised excursions and Merry-makers to allow trains to be more profitably privately chartered. In 1986 the population of West Cumbria will have little or no opportunity to enjoy any form of organized leisure travel by rail. The unwisdom of cutting down stock to the bone is self-evident, and the obvious question must be asked - What future is there for passenger trains on the West Cumbria line?

E.L. Daniels

## Hope Valley Improvements

In the north of Derbyshire, the Hope Valley local trains generally become through workings from Sheffield to Manchester Piccadilly, eliminating some annoying changes formerly necessary at New Mills Central. The hourly express service now uses the new chord line at Hazel Grove to serve Stockport and the through platforms at Piccadilly en route for Warrington and Liverpool. Some trains run through from Humberston to give a coast-to-coast service. It is noteworthy that both Harwich boat trains, from Blackpool and Glasgow/Edinburgh, call at Stockport in each direction. The route is presumably via Reddish South, Denton, Ashton Moss Junctions and Park to reach Manchester Victoria.

Malcolm Goodall

## Peakrail reconstruction gets Go-Ahead

Good news from Matlock, popular resort and terminus of the BR paytrain branch from Derby. It is reported that Peakrail have been granted detailed planning permission from West Derbyshire District Council to reconstruct a railway to Darley Dale, and they hope to begin a short shuttle service by mid-1987. At the Buxton end of the Peakrail scheme, prospects are considerably brighter following receipt of a local authority grant to replace the missing bridge. This is pleasing to those RDS people who sent letters of support for Peakrail to local authorities and the Peak Park Planning Board.

Malcolm Goodall

## Sprinters in Wales

This summer will see all Cambrian services operated by "Sprinter" DMUs, the return of a daily (SX) Aberystwyth - Euston "Cambrian Coast Express" and the return of the summer Saturday London (Euston) - Pwllheli service, the first since 1966.

Chris Magner

## BR not getting there for Yorkshire Councils

Bradford City Council is taking legal advice with a view to prosecuting British Rail over the closure of the Wortley Curve outside Leeds station without issuing a Section 56 notice. The curve allowed Inter-City trains from Bradford to bypass Leeds instead of having to go into the station and reverse, thus adding to the journey time. The Wharfedale Rail Users' Group has made various representations to BR, the PTE and the new PTA and can take much of the credit for the restoration in the May 1986 timetable of the 17.47 Bradford - Ilkley service. BR have been reminded of their repeated failure to provide the correct number of coaches on the 08.06 Ilkley - Leeds and the quite intolerable overcrowding on the 07.30 Ilkley - Leeds and 17.31 Leeds - Ilkley services. Reinstatement of the public-address system at Burley-in-Wharfedale and Menston stations has been recommended and suggestions have been made for the marketing of the improved Bradford - Ilkley service in May 1986 and thereafter.

The new Yorkshire PTA has announced that it is to open two new stations, East Garforth and Frizinghall, and to make improvements at four others. British Rail's decision to cut out the late night services between King's Cross and Thirsk has come in for strong condemnation, particularly as it is only a few

months since Hambleton District Council contributed £2000 towards the cost of new waiting facilities at Thirsk station. It had been proposed to do the same thing at Northallerton, where the Council has also given financial support for station improvements. Under pressure from North Yorkshire County Council, British Rail have agreed to retain the stop for a trial period of six months. The decision to withdraw the Scarborough Spa Express steam-hauled services in 1986 on the grounds that they only made a profit of £16000 in 1985 has also caused a row in Scarborough where the Town Council have given financial support to the venture.

Following the inquiry at the end of October 1985 into the proposal to close the line from Huddersfield to Denby Dale the T.U.C.C. have published their comments on the proposal. British Rail are strongly rebuked for their uncompromising stance throughout the hearing and for their unwillingness to negotiate with the West Yorkshire County Council in an endeavour to resolve the dispute. The T.U.C.C. are clear that extreme hardship would be caused to many people if the line closes.

Since then the line has been subject to appalling train service operation, particularly in February when the weather was at its worst. Proposed new bus services for the area served by the line show a drastic cut-back, particularly in the evening and on Sundays, whilst

Stockmoor which is served by the line will lose its bus services altogether.

Fares in South Yorkshire rose on 1st April as a result of Government restrictions on the joint board's precepts. Bus and rail fares are now equal (e.g. Sheffield to Barnsley, formerly 25p by bus and 36p by rail is now 80p by either mode) and the opportunity has been taken to introduce a dual-mode "Savercard" ticket. This "go-anywhere" equivalent of London's Capitalcard costs £15 a month.

British Rail have pulled out of Goole Docks. Container traffic coming in by sea is being transferred to "Tom Pudding" barges which will take the containers to Leeds whence they will be distributed by road.

Denis Bradbury/Derrick Joanes

## Sevenside Notes

North Filton is being dropped from the next timetable. But it was never in, in the first place because the station was private and for British Aerospace staff only. Timetables 131 and 133 are tight lipped. Some trains started or finished at St. Andrew's Road: these also served North Filton. The cause of the decline is not hard to fathom: no choice of trains, only craft workers were able to use the service. Nothing available for staff working office or management hours. Evening departure time varied day by day. No advertising of service. No service into Newport or Chepstow so Welsh residents had to use the Severn road bridge. There was no mention of the service to prospective employees as a staff benefit in kind at interview. No service available for those business travellers that BR so assiduously cultivates. Only one train each way so late passengers were stranded. Return times seemed to vary dependent upon there being an R in the month! The service was not worked as a suburban loop in the manner of the Cathcart Loop in Glasgow. In short the Settle - Carlisle saga writ small.

BR have announced that after 12th May 1986 an experimental service will link Westbury, Trowbridge, Melksham, Chippenham and Swindon. Four trains running south and three northbound with just two each way on Saturdays. Bath Spa was second to Taunton in a best kept medium size station competition.

The 18.30 Paddington to Reading and all stations to Bedwyn runs to Westbury (FO) and then on to Taunton and Exeter as a parcels train Monday to Friday. We want a campaign to get this in the timetable. It will attract revenue and cost nothing to provide.

Eric Barber

## ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

Copies of the Annual Accounts as adopted at the A.G.M. are enclosed to all members with this issue of RAILWATCH

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## East Anglia Electrification Campaign

A major issue on which this Branch has campaigned this spring has been further electrification – using the new RDS leaflet "Wanted – An Electrification Programme". This has been sent to M.Ps, councillors and many other interested bodies, highlighting the case for Royston–Cambridge and Cambridge–King's Lynn electrification and also the case for subsequent wiring-up of the Felixstowe and Sudbury branches and the cross-country route from Ipswich to Peterborough.

Branch Secretary, Trevor Garrod, was interviewed about the campaign on BBC Radio Norfolk and on 10th April the "East Anglian Daily Times" published a sympathetic editorial on our proposals. Among other things, this editorial suggested that EEC money could help BR to electrify, adding "There is the need to upgrade our rail links all over the country to match the standards of our European neighbours".

Trevor Garrod

## Anglia Ranger Discontinued

BR have withdrawn the popular One-Day Anglia Ranger ticket, despite a variety of strong protests from RDS and users' groups. They claimed that users of this ticket were causing abstraction from "Saver" revenue. We do not share Eastern Region management's optimism that people who have, for example, used the "Ranger" for journeys between, say Cambridge and Yarmouth will automatically pay more for such journeys. We fear that business will be lost to coaches.

Trevor Garrod

## Special Trains in East Anglia

The special train season in our region started well, with nearly 500 passengers on the excursion from North Walsham to the Severn Valley Railway on 12th April, organized by our corporate member the North East Norfolk Travellers' Association. This was the first of five such trips planned by NENTA this year. An RDS special train is due to run on the Wisbech branch again on Sunday 13th July (subject to confirmation at the time of writing). This will be a DMU to Lowestoft, and should be the seventh passenger train we have run from this Fenland town, which lost its passenger service in 1968 but still has a healthy freight traffic. Cambridgeshire County Councillor, David Green, who was guest speaker at our AGM in February and is Chairman of the Passenger Transport Subcommittee, is hoping to persuade his colleagues to look again at the case for restoring regular passenger trains to both Wisbech and St. Ives.

Trevor Garrod

## Thames Valley Timetables

Stopping services in the middle Thames Valley are being changed in the next timetable. Quite unnecessary changes have been inserted for passengers travelling to stations other than Paddington. Up to 30 minutes more can be expected. A painful loss is the stop at Langley for trains that were stopping at Ealing Broadway, Langley then all stations to Reading (at least). Westbound passengers on the all stations trains to Langley could alight, stay on the platform, and await the all stations to Reading. From May they will go back to the bad old days with an arrival in the up bay at Slough fight a path across the footbridge back down the stairs and wait on the down relief platform. Fine for the fit, but ghastly for people with bicycles or prams or walking frame. Ah! says my tame railman, 'our passengers are commuters'. Not so, commuters go by car in this part of the world, tis quicker.

So that there is sufficient stock for the re-introduced services across West London the early morning train from Paddington and Reading has been withdrawn and a DMU service substituted. It leaves Banbury 45 minutes earlier and is all stations to Birmingham Moor Street. Now if it started from Basingstoke and linked Reading West to Tilehurst it would be rather good.

Lyndon Elias

## More Changes in Docklands

Construction of the Docklands Light Railway is continuing to make excellent progress, and, as foreshadowed in the last RAILWATCH, the finished line will be considerably different from what was first envisaged. All being well – legislative powers are being sought at the time of writing – the line will terminate at the Bank instead of Tower Gateway. The DLR's spokesman, Dave Sexton, says they don't yet know whether the original terminus will be redundant. They are sure, however, that the 11 trains first ordered will be insufficient. The first, not designed for tunnel working, which now becomes necessary, will arrive in August. It may be decided to design different trains later for use on the final stretch to the Bank.

Jack Ellis

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Mr Cooper is responsible for REGIONAL NOTES, Mr Willson for all other material. To ensure inclusion in the next issue (to be published in OCTOBER) all material must be in the hands of the appropriate Editor by WEDNESDAY 13th AUGUST.

## 20,000 Cheap Rides on 1066 Gala Day

The 1066 electrics – the newly electrified service from Charing Cross to Hastings, got off to a remarkably good start. The real service opened on 12th May, but B.R. celebrated the event with a Gala Day on a previous Sunday.

Passengers could ride all day on the 33-mile line from Tonbridge to Hastings – the newly-equipped stretch – for just 50p. Trains ran at 20 minute intervals and 10,000 passengers were expected. To be on the safe side B.R. printed 20,000 tickets – enough, it was thought, to meet the widest expectations of demand. Yet, despite a rather cool day, the traffic exceeded this figure by between ten and fifteen thousand. Tickets were sold out and latecomers travelled free.

The RDS, with considerable help from the local users' groups, had played a leading role in the campaign for electrification. There was even a risk of closure before the decision was taken to electrify. The former diesel trains, due for urgent replacement, had been specially designed to fit the narrow tunnels, where the track has now been singled.

The coastal route to Hastings, via Eastbourne, had long been electrified, only the problem of narrow tunnels had delayed that of the direct route via Tunbridge Wells. New hopes are rising for electrification of the remaining 26 mile link between Hastings and Ashford, thus serving the picture postcard resort of Rye and relieving coastal traffic from the Channel Tunnel. There are indeed rumours of a "cheap" electrification scheme for this once-threatened branch.

## London Boroughs fund transport group

To mitigate the disadvantages of abolition, eight London Boroughs – Camden, Greenwich, Hackney, Haringey, Islington, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark – have provided initial funding for the London Strategic Policy Unit. This group will monitor bus and tube services and be closely concerned with the siting of the Channel Tunnel terminal and congestion problems caused by coaches. Major road building will be opposed. The group is situated at 20, Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1

Jack Ellis

# IN PARLIAMENT

No. 27

JULY 1986

## PREVIEW

### MP'S COW-ON-LINE JOKE UPSETS BR

Tony Speller (C. North Devon) tells me BR didn't think it funny when he made a joke on a Commons order paper at the expense of the railways.

He merely put down an "early day" motion, facetiously suggesting that locomotives should carry a plastic model of a cow in front of them. This, he explained, was harping on the perennial jibe, when a train stops in the country for no apparent reason, and passengers say: "There's a cow on the line!"

We did this, he said, because such delays happen all too often on Western Region, which he regularly uses to reach his constituency. But BR protested at his use of "inflammatory language."

Early day motions are of course just expressions of opinion by MPs, either individuals or groups. They are intended to influence other politicians but never likely to be debated.

The West country has been lumbered with some duff old rolling stock lately, Mr. Speller told me, but he is delighted with the new "sprinter" trains, which incidentally have lavatories on board. He thinks they should be giving traffic quite a boost this summer.

What about the marvellous transformation brought about by Network South East. I asked him – the unification of six London regions and raising the whole standard. "Yes," he said, it's happened almost by stealth."

What about his campaign for reopening closed stations? "I'd be having another go if the suitable ones weren't so far away from me," he said.

### NOT OVER THE MOON ABOUT NETWORK SE

Nigel Spearing (Lab. Newham South) is not exactly over the moon about Network South East. Re-painting the trains, he says, putting up matched signs at stations, and promising or hoping for better performance – "these are relative superficialities that deserve to be greeted with cynicism." He would rather see a cheaper capitalcard and

"Crossrail" links publicly funded, with an interchange in the Covent Garden area (an RDS idea, incidentally.)

("What, by the way, is the attitude of London Strategic Policy Unit to Network South East? "A good marketing exercise," says their spokesman, Eddie Tulasiewicz, "but it deals more with outer areas rather than Greater London, which is still the poor relation of LRT.")

Lord Jenkins (of Putney) (Lab.), whose travels don't take him far outside London nowadays, is happy about Network South East and even happier about the improvements to stations on the Underground.

"I use the Underground more than anything else," he told me. "I'm particularly pleased at the way the redecoration is being respected. Now that the tubes look better cared for they don't seem to be vandalised."

JE

### Employment on ferries would fall, then rise

FEBRUARY 10 Mr. Ridley, proposing that the Government's White Paper on the Channel Fixed Link be approved, said that when the link opened, employment on the ferries would certainly fall. "The Government judge that the total direct employment on cross-Channel transport operations will be some 1500 less than now. But thereafter employment will rise again, both on the link and the ferries. Long-term employment effects are fairly neutral." The rail link from London to Paris and Brussels would be very competitive with air transport. These were great benefits.

"With the tunnel becoming nearer to reality, the natural conservatism of the British people is coming to the fore. Will rabies come? Will the Russians invade? Should Britain not remain an island? I sympathise with these emotional arguments, but I do not believe that they are rational."

In the short term the concern was to make the scheme as environmentally acceptable as possible – in disposal of the soil, the workings at the foot of the

Shakespeare cliff, landscaping of the Cheriton site, and construction of the tunnels under Honeywell Combe.

Robert Hughes (Lab. Aberdeen North) proposed an amendment to make approval of the White Paper conditional on financial help for BR and on maximising opportunities for industry and communities away from the immediate location of the fixed link.

Mr. Hughes said he welcomed the BR press statement, explaining how it intended to run through trains from different parts of the country, and hoped that there would be discussions with immigration and customs officials to have these facilities carried out on the train. There seemed to be doubt, however, as to whether those bodies would co-operate. "I believe that investment in BR must be expanded, even if the Channel tunnel is not to go ahead."

Roger Gale (C. Thanet North) said the Thanet towns endured 27% male unemployment, a declining agricultural industry and a decline in the bucket and spade holiday. Thanet's greatest asset was the port of Ramsgate; its demise would be devastating.

In France the government had issued a document setting out, chapter and verse, what they were spending in terms of ports with the development of Dunkirk, Calais and Boulogne, in terms of rail links with existing ports. We had no equal document available to us.

Stephen Ross (L/A, IoW) said the figure of 27% male unemployment was on a par with the Isle of Wight. If either of the two bridge projects had been favoured, there would have been an even greater outcry from Kent citizens.

"I welcome what appears to be an easing of the purse strings for BR. I hope the minister (Mr. Mitchell), who is keeping his portfolio to look after BR, will continue to press BR's claims for extra capital to carry out the programmes that are desperately needed. There is a great opportunity for the Channel Link to improve our railways."

"There must be considerably more investment if we are to take full advantage of the opportunities to provide through freight services for Scotland, the north and the west of England. The Alliance will consistently press that

**COMMONS DEBATES** In the selected extracts from parliamentary speeches and answers to questions, which follow this PREVIEW, Commons replies are given by Transport Secretary, Nicholas Ridley (latterly John Moore) or his Minister of State, David Mitchell, or Under-Secretary, Michael Spicer.

C = Conservative, Lab. = Labour, L/A = Liberal Alliance.

point. I hope more financial incentives for private rail sidings throughout Britain will be forthcoming. This is a marvellous opportunity to get substantial quantities of freight back on to rail and off our crowded roads."

### Freight would compete on more equal terms

Peter Fry (C. Wellingborough) said it was ironic that some people against the link objected to so much freight being carried by road and not rail. The link had always been seen by BR as a major opportunity to take advantage of the length of carriage that this country lacks. This had always put BR at a disadvantage. The link would mean that for the first time it could compete equally.

Mark Wolfson (C. Sevenoaks) said he welcomed the minister's commitment to an extension of BR's external financing limit. Down the years the French government had been readier to subsidise their rail network in terms of capital investment than we had been. It was important that BR was not limited in the opportunity it was given to build a competitive system with French railways in the wake of the Channel link. The new improved commuter routes round Paris put BR to shame.

"It is essential that customs and immigration procedures are done on the train if the through trains are to operate effectively, particularly from Scotland and the north. That will require a fundamental change in outlook - which is exactly what the Channel fixed link is all about. It is simply not to make no fundamental change. Decanting passengers for a customs check will be a major disincentive to train travel."

### Environmental damage must be limited

David Crouch (C. Canterbury) said the tunnel would be a magnet for traffic and Kent would have to pay a high price. The challenge to the Government and the Channel Tunnel Group was that they must limit damage to the environment. "Let us hear about landscaping. We should not blame the people of Kent for standing up and trying to preserve their heritage."

Stuart Holland (Lab. Vauxhall) said the dispersal of traffic was relevant to his constituents, since the sole outlet terminus scheduled by the Government was Waterloo. "The dispersal argument is a strong one. If we are to make effective use of this link, we need to be able to by-pass London, via Euston to the north-east, or via the Snow Hill tunnel when it is completed."

"I can see the indicator flashing at the Gare du Nord for the next train to go to Victoria or Waterloo, or through the Snow Hill tunnel to Birmingham, Newcastle or Glasgow. If there is not this

dispersal of traffic, the commercial viability of the project will be profoundly qualified. The real advantage of rail over air is time and convenience."

### Road tunnel could be added later

Sir John Osborne (C. Sheffield Hallam) said there was no reason why the Channel Tunnel Group (CTG) should not start with rail and, if traffic demand increased to justify it, supplement the original two rail tunnels with a road tunnel. It was better to start with known technology.

Dr. John Marek (Lab. Wrexham) said the Chunnel was potentially the biggest boost for railways in Britain this century, following decades of neglect. "BR predicts that cross-Channel passenger traffic will jump from the present figure of three million a year to nine million in the first year of the tunnel's operation as a result of self-generated traffic, and as the reliability and price competitiveness of rail services divert passengers from air travel."

"These figures are based on conventional train speeds. By the year 2003, when new high-speed rail services will be open to Brussels and Paris, passenger traffic is expected to rise to an annual total of 11 million."

Present cross-Channel carryings of freight were only two million tonnes. BR estimated that six million tonnes of cross-Channel freight would be railborne at the end of the first year of operation, rising to seven million tonnes by the year 2003. Dr. Marek hoped the Chunnel project went ahead without any impediment.

### Cross-Party support for and against

Peter Snape (Lab. West Bromwich East) said the debate had shown the depth of cross-party support both for and against the scheme. The Opposition wanted assurances on the future of British manufacturing industry.

Roger Moate (C. Faversham) asked the minister, on the subject of investments, if and when BR would have the resources necessary to widen the loading gauge so that through container traffic from all parts of the UK would be able to use the tunnel.

Mr. Mitchell: "That is something BR is planning." Replying to the debate, he said he agreed that it was desirable that Customs and Excise facilities should if possible be carried out on the trains. "We are discussing with them what is needed."

The project was bound to have an effect on the environment-damaging local effects and wider national benefits. "I will chair in Kent a committee consisting of local authorities, the Department

of the Environment and the promoters. We shall be looking at ways of carrying the project through with a minimum of practical damage."

On a division the amendment was lost by 263 votes to 173, and the Government motion was carried by 268 votes to 107, a majority of 161.

### Planning a rail link for Stansted Airport

A private member's Bill to authorise the purchase of land for the building of a railway link to Stansted airport was debated on FEBRUARY 24. It was introduced by Patrick McNair-Wilson (C. New Forest), who moved that the British Railways (Stansted) Bill be read a second time. It went into committee at the end of June.

Mr. McNair-Wilson said the Bill reflected a prudent and sensible attitude on behalf of the BR Board to ensure that powers existed to build a railway should the proper finance be available. The new length of railway would be about four miles long, from a point on the London to Cambridge line a short distance north of Stansted station, into the enlarged airport site. Manchester already had such provisions, and this would bring Stansted into line with Manchester.

Alan Haselhurst (C. Saffron Walden) said it was extraordinary that the House should be asked to approve a rail link for an airport which currently had a throughput of half a million passengers a year, when there was still no surface rail link for Heathrow, with 31 million passengers a year.

Mr. Mitchell said that the Manchester rail link scheme would be considered in no less favourable terms than the Stansted one. The criteria would be no less favourable.

On a division the motion was carried by 66 votes to 37, a majority of 29.

### North Wales blighted by defective rail services

Transport was the subject discussed at a meeting on MARCH 26 of the Welsh Grand Committee - one of the periodical meetings of the committee devoted wholly to Welsh affairs and presided over by the Welsh Secretary, Nicholas Edwards.

Barry Jones (Lab. Alyn and Deeside), after speaking of the need for "vastly improved road communications" pleaded for "greater commitment from senior management to the future of the rail industry." He asked: "What prospects are there for electrification from Crewe to Holyhead? The North Wales - London route is the Cinderella of the railway. BR had said it wanted to electrify Cardiff - Paddington in the early 1990's."

Dafydd Wigley (Plaid Cymru - Welsh Nat. Carnarvon) intervened to ask if an incoming Labour Government would electrify the Holyhead line within 10 years.

Mr. Jones: "It has to be for BR to give details first. The Opposition will never make off-the-cuff promises of projects that cannot be paid for in early years, but the upgrading of that line will be a top priority."

Mr. Edwards asked if a future Labour Government intended to provide BR with additional finance to carry out that work.

Mr. Jones replied that their programme was based on that, but the minister had said nothing about upgrading any of the major routes in Wales, which was a dereliction of duty towards the Welsh people and their rail network.

### Minister agrees with criticism of BR

Mr. Edwards said he agreed with the criticism of the existing service on the North Wales line. It would be helpful to speak out to BR from the committee that it should improve that service.

Mr. Jones said he asked ministers to consider urgently the many problems developing. He wondered whether senior executives of BR might appear before MPs, perhaps in the Welsh select committee. The efforts of North Wales to attract new industry were blighted by defective rail services.

### Chance to grow into richest market

JUNE 5 Mr. Moore, opening the debate on the Channel Tunnel Bill, said the Channel Tunnel would provide an opportunity for our industry to expand and grow into one of the richest markets in the world. It would give British business the opportunity to gain even larger slices of an enormous market. Everyone could see the immediate, short-term boost in jobs and wealth. "Any other nation, I am bound to say, would seize the opportunity with open arms. The economic rewards far outweigh the costs."

Robert Hughes (Lab. Aberdeen North) moved an amendment urging the creation of a Channel Office of Fair Trading, to ensure freedom of choice for cross-Channel custom.

Intervening in the course of Mr. Hughes's speech, Robert Adley (C. Christchurch) asked if he would make it clear that the Labour party supported the building of the tunnel.

Mr. Hughes said their attitude to the tunnel could be expressed by the phrase, "If it were to be done, 'twere better that it be done well.'" That is not the exact Shakespearean quotation."

Andrew Faulds (Lab. Warley E): "I must warn the House that to quote that particular play (Macbeth) is profoundly unlucky."

Mr. Hughes: "I hope it is not unlucky for me. Perhaps you did not hear the quotation in full. The actual quotation is, 'twere done quickly.' I did not use the proper quotation because it is not particularly apposite and referred to the assassination of Julius Caesar. It is certainly not my intention to kill off the Channel Tunnel Bill. I want to encourage the success of CTG."

He said there should be a mechanism to monitor the interplay between sea and air traffic and the fixed link. A predatory pricing regime could be adopted to the disadvantage of the tunnel business. A Channel Office of Fair Trading would concern itself with monitoring the operation of the tunnel.

Peter Riss (C. Dover) said the tunnel would dislocate and vary the economic patterns experienced in the past 20 or 25 years and east Kent would deserve some kind of special status.

Sir Julian Ridsdale (C. Harwich) said there would be considerable problems for the sea container trade. It would be tragic if we lost that trade to France, which was making a dead set for sea container traffic.

### Great opportunity for railway system

Stephen Ross (L/A IoW) said he supported the project, which helped to move Britain into the 21st century. It gave our railway system a great opportunity to take some of the traffic off our crowded roads. He would have preferred a rail-only tunnel. In 1974 Anthony Crosland said he had to accept the shuttle, although he had been in favour of rail only. "It becomes even more a necessity when private money is being used."

Mr. Ross added that he had been got at in the Isle of Wight because many seafarers lived there who operated ships out of Portsmouth. Ferry traffic to France from Portsmouth was increasing. Sometimes, I wish we could build a tunnel to the Isle of Wight. My constituents would say that that is the most expensive crossing in the world.

"Competition is desirable. Ferries will run from places such as Portsmouth, Plymouth and up the East coast, because people will not want to drive all the round to Dover. I hope that Dover will survive, but let us be open about it; Dover will have a problem."

A document just signed by Jimmy Knapp, Ray Buckton and other leaders of the rail unions said that once the tunnel was in operation, the new speed of connections to continental destinations would place firms in the regions on a more equal footing with firms

nearer the south. "I couldn't have put it better myself."

Roger Gale (C. Thanet N) said he could see some economic advantages in the tunnel for his constituents, but only when undertakings had been given that the Department of Transport would support and if necessary fund the dualing of the road that Ramsgate needed to survive.

### No tunnel could mean Beeching-type cuts

Alfred Dubs (Lab. Battersea) said that if we decided not to have a tunnel he feared that we would be faced with further Beeching-type cuts in BR and freight would move almost entirely to the roads. "I do not want to see that happen. In the next century we shall regret the rail closures that have already taken place."

If the result of the tunnel was a movement from the roads to the railways, there would be major environmental advantages throughout the country. "I hope that a by-product of the tunnel project will be that BR will take note and do something to improve its services." (He would like to see BR develop higher speed trains,) but 93 mph from London to the Channel is not bad to be going on with. I hope the effect of the tunnel on the number of short-haul flights from London to the other side of the Channel will have a beneficial environmental effect. I envisage enormous economic benefits to Britain if freight trains can run from the north of England to the Ruhr and through to Italy."

Stuart Holland (Lab. Vauxhall) intervened to ask if the concentration of traffic in one terminus, Waterloo, could be disadvantageous to the dispersal Mr. Dubs was speaking of.

Mr. Dubs replied that one of the benefits of the tunnel would be for trains travelling to the Midlands or the north. "The tunnel offers more benefits in the movement of freight than of passengers."

### Chance for railhead at new Covent Garden

He hoped that development at Stewarts Lane would take place at a lower rather than a higher level and so have less impact on people living there. "A matter of wider interest to my constituency concerns the new Covent Garden Market. A proposal that it should have a railhead was not followed through. I shall regret it even more if it is not provided now, when other rail developments are taking place close to the market. BR should become entrepreneurial and make a bid for traffic now coming by road, often in expensive refrigerated vehicles."

*Charles Wardle* (C. Bexhill & Battle) said he supported the tunnel. "Typical of many British people, I support but do not intend to use it. That method of travel does not appeal to me. But to have a private enterprise scheme of this size and nature is enormously important."

### RDS advice on terminal is strongly urged

*Mr. Holland* said the argument that there should be only one terminal for tunnel passengers in London had never been satisfactorily justified. Why pick Waterloo? BR admitted that no quantified research had been done on other possibilities, such as Victoria, King's Cross or Olympia. A case could be made for Blackfriars.

"I shall cite a letter dated April 30 from Mr. K. Meyer of the National Council on Inland Transport." This stated that "both this Council and the Railway Development Society are convinced that Waterloo is the wrong choice, both as regards linkage to the London road and the public transport network and proximity to the City. This is also the view of Transport 2000 London."

Blackfriars would be a much better location. It would be less costly in route alteration expenditure, and would offer the opportunity of through working, using the Snow Hill route." *Mr. Holland* said he hoped the minister, the House and the public would address themselves to these issues. The community in the Waterloo area was threatened.

### Tunnel borings led to discovery of Kent coal

*Robert Adley* (C. Christchurch) said it was depressing to hear the dismal Jimmies who could see nothing but problems. He had discovered from research in slightly unusual places that borings for the tunnel in the last century led to the discovery of coal below the chalk of east Kent. "Who knows what might be discovered underneath the middle of the Channel?" He supported very much the Government's decision to build a rail tunnel. He suggested that Mr. Holland would agree that London should be given a wide berth by Chunnel trains and Tonbridge - Reading should be electrified.

*Mr. Mitchell* said future generations would look back on the debate as an historic occasion and ask why the tunnel had not been built before.

On a division the amendment was lost by 317 votes to 146, a Government majority of 171. The Bill was then given a second reading by 309 votes to 44, a Government majority of 265.

A debate followed resembling a filibuster, about the constitution of the proposed committee.

## HOUSE OF LORDS

(Reply given by Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Department of Transport, the Earl of Caithness).

**FEBRUARY 26** A two-hour debate on the proposed closure of the Settle - Carlisle line was introduced by Baroness Stedman, opposition to the closure has grown since then and there is no likelihood of an early decision.

### 'Closure procedures need updating'

*Lady Stedman* is an SDP whip and a former junior minister in the last Labour Government. She asked if the Government was satisfied with existing procedures and said there was growing concern that railway closure procedures needed updating. There was also wider concern because local authorities and commercial and environmental organisations had no statutory right to be heard, and there was no opportunity for the wider range of issues - effect on the local economy, the pursuit of leisure, the tourist interest - to be examined in public.

"I believe the time has come to argue for changes in the statutory procedure." She wanted to use the proposed closure of the Settle - Carlisle line as an example. This line was part of our national heritage, with the Ribbleshead viaduct and all the other structures. Ribbleshead station building was at one time used for church services and as a weather station. Many of the viaducts, tunnels, bridges and stations on the line were now ancient monuments or listed buildings.

### Earlier pruning might have stopped Beeching

*The Bishop of Newcastle* (the Rt. Rev. A.A.K. Graham), in a maiden speech, said that it was commonly held that BR should have pruned their network more purposefully before Beeching. Had they done so, the cuts would probably not have been so extensive. Now, with hindsight, there was a general view that these cuts were excessive.

"Social and environmental factors were clearly in the mind of William Wordsworth when in 1844 he composed his sonnet, 'On the projected Kendal and Windemere Railway,' a line which runs not far from the one in question. The poet referred to a 'false utilitarian lure' which had led to the planning of the railway. One cannot help thinking that precisely a false utilitarian lure underlies the proposal to close the line, and that there are powerful social and environmental forces which more than outweigh this false utilitarian lure's attractiveness."

*Lord Peel* (C.) said he believed the line was a national asset, with implications from a heritage, environment, social and tourist point of view. The rub-on effects from this service could produce a much-needed boost to the local economy.

### No closure likely before the election

*Baroness Lockwood* (Lab.) said that with an increasing level of traffic that could be generated the line could be a very viable proposition. The county councils involved felt that a full public inquiry would be much more appropriate so that wider problems could be fully examined.

*Lord Henderson* (Lab.) said it was inconceivable that any closure could be contemplated before the next general election, though it was not a party matter. BR might be so impressed by everything said in the House about the wider significance of the rail link that they would be well advised to withdraw their notice of closure.

*Lord Clitheroe* (C.) said that much of the industry of the country was gravitating south, including tourism. It needed to be generated in the north. If the line was promoted effectively, it could draw considerable revenue for a relatively small outlay.

*Viscount Buckmaster* (Independent) said it was delightful to have a bishop speaking about railways, because the link between railways and the church had always been powerful. This line had always struck him as more than a railway; it was an uplifting experience.

*Lord Carmichael of Kelvingrove* (Lab.) said Lady Stedman was giving an opportunity to the whole country to realise that perhaps we had had enough rail closures, particularly those of the very important and special nature of the Settle - Carlisle line.

Replying to the debate, *The Earl of Caithness* said that nothing so far had persuaded him that this case was so different from previous closure cases that the existing procedures should be supplemented by a public inquiry.

"Some meetings have already taken place with representatives from local authorities and I have no doubt more will follow. All points made during the debate will be thoroughly examined."

If there were parties or bodies interested in making some financial contribution towards the retention of historic structures on the line, he would be pleased to know about it. "We should be happy to receive representations at any time before the minister makes his decision."