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P R O G R E S S R E P O R T

No. 99

JUNE 1974MAXIMUM USE OF RAILWAYS ESSENTIAL

(Text of the Chairman's address delivered at the annual general meeting of the Society held in Gloucester, 27th April, 1974)

✓x With the oil crisis it has become imperative to rethink national energy and, consequently, transport policies. Although the crisis was sparked off towards the end of last year by political action in the Middle East, the real basis of the problem lies in the finite supplies of world petroleum reserves which, at the present rate of use, can be expected to last for only a few decades. Long term plans to meet this situation must, therefore, be implemented without delay.

Transport planning must now be seen in terms of energy consumption with the greatest emphasis being placed on transport modes least dependent on oil. The way ahead, therefore, should be in no doubt - maximum use of the railways which can either use electric traction derived from other fuels or at least make the most economical use of the limited oil which is available. For example, whereas a 32 ton lorry affords only 143 net ton miles per gallon of diesel fuel, conveyance in a 1,500 ton freight train provides as much as 455 net ton miles per gallon.

However, although government plans were announced last November which would increase investment in the railways, this only began to touch the surface of the problem and there has so far been no sign of the massive re-allocation of transport resources in favour of rail which will inevitably be required in the future and must be implemented urgently before it is too late.

First and foremost must come electrification, where apart from a few suburban lines, no major new projects are at present in hand. As far as the main lines are concerned, the long-awaited Glasgow extension of the London Midland Region electrification is due to commence operation in May and will thus permit electric haulage throughout Britain's most important trunk route. However, this is the only such route so equipped and is all that we have been able to achieve in the 19 years since main-line electrification was first proposed in the 1955 Railway Modernisation Plan. By contrast, other European countries, such as France and Germany, have managed to electrify most of their main lines. At the existing rate of progress,

electrification of even the most important main lines in Britain could take up to well into the 21st century, long after experts predict that oil supplies will have become exhausted if used at the present rate of consumption.

Progress must, therefore, be greatly accelerated and a rolling programme of electrification set in motion, whereby completion of one route is immediately followed by the starting of work on another. Such a plan, which would also greatly help the electrical manufacturing industry, could convert our major routes to electric traction within the next 15 years.

Electrification is only one of the ways in which the railways will need re-equipment to meet the new situation; much needs to be done to improve track and signalling, to permit higher speeds and comfort and to improve track capacity. Furthermore, stations and freight depots need modernisation. Then, apart from the trunk routes, it is also vital to develop the cross-country lines, some of which have seen little improvement since steam days. Routes such as Birmingham-Leicester-East Anglia and Leeds-Manchester-Liverpool are cross country inter-city routes which fall far below the standard needed to attract custom from the roads and they must be upgraded. Other routes, such as Oxford-Cambridge and Gloucester-Hereford, which have been closed in recent years, should be re-opened to fill in important gaps in the railway system and provide direct links between centres of major importance.

Special attention is needed for freight. Proposals to provide government grants for installation of private sidings are to be welcomed and should be extended to cover installation of rail connections to industrial estates and the provision of private freight handling equipment. An urgent programme of research should be set in motion to investigate the most effective means of handling single wagon load traffic on rail, which constitutes a major proportion of the national freight market but where rail's share has rapidly declined in recent years.

Although it is increasingly recognised that this re-development of the railways is essential, there is grave danger that the necessary capital will not be made available by the Government, especially in the present economic climate. Indeed, railway development has suffered a number of setbacks over the past two decades in times of economic difficulties and this could well continue in the years ahead. The necessary capital could be made available, however, by effecting a corresponding reduction in the road programme, especially in the construction of motorways. The primary motorway network is now largely complete and many of the schemes now being projected are of secondary importance even if oil were to be plentiful - in changed circumstances ahead they could well prove to be expensive white elephants even before they have been completed.

Hundreds of millions of pounds a year could be released immediately by such a cut-back in the motorway programme and would provide all the finance needed to re-equip the railways for their vital role of the future. Up to the present, road and rail have been considered largely in isolation. It is now essential to plan a total transport strategy with the direction of resources where they will be most effective in meeting future needs, and this must mean less dependence on oil-hungry road transport and more on rail. Is it too much to expect the politicians to take effective action before irreparable harm is done to Britain's future mobility? X

RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions passed at our annual general meeting this year were as follows:-

- (1) With the construction of the Channel Tunnel, a review of rail traction and service policies should be carried out, with a view to re-organisation of services.
- (2) In connection with resolution 1, consideration should be given to the re-development of rail ferry ships to Irish sea services (between Stranraer and Larne) and the provision of gauge-changing equipment on the Irish side, if justified by traffic, to handle sleeper and day services and container traffic.
- \*(3) The Society deplores H.M. Government's decision, as a matter of economic policy, to increase rail passenger and freight charges by up to 15 per cent. With the greatly-increased cost of fuel oil providing the opportunity for railways to become price-competitive with road and air transport, the Society urges that freezing the level of charges would enable Britain's railways to make a significant contribution to the transport and environmental needs of the country, by their inherent economy of land and energy use and their low impact on the environment. The resultant reduction in road congestion and allied ill-effects would be of substantial monetary value, which, together with the increased rail traffic which might follow price restraint, should be set against the current rail deficit.

\* sent to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

STONEHOUSE BURDETT ROAD STATION: VICTORY!!

✓X British Rail has confirmed that Stonehouse Burdett Road station, due for closure last year, is to be retained.

The station buildings and platforms are over 100 years old. Continued use of the station in accordance with present-day safety standards means the spending of over £16,000 on new platforms, station shelters and lighting. Meetings between Stonehouse Parish Council, British Rail, Stroud Urban District Council and Gloucestershire County Council have resulted in such worthwhile discussions that Stonehouse Parish Council has agreed to contribute over £13,000 towards the cost of this work. In return, British Rail has indicated that not only will the present service continue to run, but that consideration is being given to an increase in the number of trains which call at the station, including the provision of a Sunday service.

The Three Counties Branch of this Society can justly claim an important share in this notable victory for all who believe that the rail way is the best way. Officials and members of the Branch spent much time in collecting information on this problem and in pointing out to the parties to the discussions ways in which a train service from Stonehouse could be maintained.

This get-together by local authorities and British Rail clearly shows that, by a mutual understanding of each others difficulties and where both sides are prepared to make a financial

contribution to retain a service, many rail services with uncertain future can be saved. British Rail and the local authorities concerned in this particular venture have stated that they will watch closely the result of their co-operation and that it is their intention to promote rail travel by all possible means. X

IN PARLIAMENT

Selections from the official reports

(including certain material omitted from our last issue, owing to lack of space)

House of Commons

Ministerial announcements

1974

✓ X 3rd April Channel Tunnel Mr. Anthony Crosland (Secretary of State for the Environment) . . . . .

On 25th October last year, my colleagues and I, on behalf of the Labour Opposition, divided the House on an amendment which stated that, while we were not opposed in principle to a Channel Tunnel, we declined to approve the scheme in its present form and demanded an inquiry into alternative transport strategies. In line with this attitude, the Government have decided that a full and searching reassessment of the project should be carried out before any decision is taken to embark on the main works. The current phase 2 already provides for a joint reassessment of the traffic, revenue and financial forecasts in the light of changes in, for example, the energy outlook. But I shall in addition, as a matter of urgency, consider whether the studies now in hand fully cover the points which we and others raised in the last Parliament, and I propose to seek outside advice. In particular, I shall examine with the French Government and the Railways Board the need to orient the project much more strongly towards through rail services.

I have concluded that to keep open the option of eventually going ahead with the tunnel it would be right for phase 2 to take its course. I shall therefore reintroduce the Channel Tunnel Bill. In order to avoid abortive costs to petitioners I shall introduce it in the same form as in the last Session. I stress that the object of proceeding with phase 2 is to keep our options open. It does not prejudice any decision on the project beyond the end of the present phase. Before phase 2 ends in the summer of next year I shall report the outcome of the reassessment to the House. Parliament and the Government will then have finally to decide whether or not to sign Agreement No.3 and build the tunnel.

Mrs. Thatcher (Finchley) . . . would the rt. hon. Gentleman be a little more forthcoming about the review and the studies which he now has in hand? His statement was a little vague on this point. Dealing with previous debates, he said that he expected the study fully to cover the points raised then. Having been through those debates, may I ask him whether he expects such a review to be completed by the end of the summer, because almost every point was raised? Would he expect that review to include alternative strategies for providing for the large volume of both freight and passenger traffic which will undoubtedly take place? Would he also be more forthcoming about the nature of the outside advice that he proposes to seek? Mr. Crosland I would certainly expect the review to be completed not by this summer but by next summer. The summer of 1975 is what phase 2 requires and what I mentioned in my statement. The review will certainly take account

of alternative transport strategies. Our criticism on this side in the debates last autumn was that the Government's proposals were based on the wrong transport strategy. We shall certainly examine alternatives. As for the outside assessment of the consultants' further work, I have not yet decided the form that this will take but I hope to announce it to the House when I do.

Mr. Huckfield (Nuneaton) . . . What is the cost of phase 2 as now envisaged, and what is the total cost of the project as my right hon. Friend now envisages it? In view of the current energy and public expenditure constraints, is my right hon. Friend still convinced that we need the currently proposed underwater vehicle ferry? Will he give an undertaking seriously to re-examine the whole question of the proposed mix of public and private capital? Mr. Crosland The total cost of phase 2 is £30 million, of which £15 million will fall on Britain and £15 million on France. The only cost in terms of public expenditure - this is a contingent cost - is the Government guarantee on the loan which forms part of the £15 million. Concerning the mix of traffic, this will be almost the central aspect of the re-assessment which we propose to make. We on the Government side of the House took the view strongly in the debates that we have had, that we wanted a much heavier orientation towards rail and away from the concept of the rolling motorway.

Mr. Stephen Ross (Isle of Wight) . . . I am glad to hear from the Secretary of State that the Government are proceeding with the introduction of the Bill and to read of the promise made by the right hon. Gentleman that he is to consult more fully with the British Rail Board. We on the Liberal bench consider that a rail-only tunnel has considerable merit, subject to the proviso that access points should be more widely distributed throughout the country and that there should not be one massive distribution area in Kent. (Hon. Members: "Question!"). Mr. Crosland As hon. Members of the last Parliament will recall, I was initially a supporter of a rail-only tunnel, but on closer examination I do not think that a rail-only tunnel is a possible answer. What we must have, however, is a tunnel far more oriented to the rail side of the traffic and less to the rolling road ferry service.

Mr. Ogden (Liverpool, West Derby) . . . By whom will the reassessment be undertaken? Will those undertaking it be asking for evidence or points of view from other organisations? Is it to be a reassessment entirely within the Department, or in the form of a Green Paper? What particular form will it take? Is my right hon. Friend able to give any assurance about the proposals for putting phase 3 forward, and the work that will follow from that, and the danger that would arise for industry, the Channel Tunnel and British Railways if there were to be a time lag between the ending of the work at that stage and the possibility of work carrying forward again under any different proposal that Parliament may implement? Mr. Crosland I take note of my hon. Friend's third point, on which I cannot give a precise answer now. I should like to consider what he has said. On his first and main point, the reassessment will be carried out by a number of people acting jointly - the United Kingdom Government, the French Government, British Railways - and basing themselves on the detailed work done by the consultants who carried out the studies during phase I. But, in addition to that, as I have told the House already, I am anxious to have an outside group of people who will consider critically the studies that come from the consultants, and we have not yet decided on that group.

Mr. Hooley (Sheffield, Healey) ... In making this re-appraisal will my right hon. Friend pay special attention to the economic impact of this project from a regional point of view, in regard to the South-East Region vis-à-vis the other regions of this country? Will he pay particular attention to the problem that if it is to be primarily a rail tunnel the marshalling and assembly of freight need not take place in the South-East at all? Mr. Crosland I am very conscious of the point made by my hon. Friend. The regional aspect was one of the matters which were heavily underlined in the terms of the amendment which I moved on behalf of the then Labour Opposition last October.

Sir John Rodgers (Sevenoaks) Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that his decision to embark on a reappraisal and reassessment will be greeted in many quarters of Kent with great support? As part of that reassessment will the right hon. Gentleman say whether British Railways will continue immediately with the talks which they have delayed up to date with the people who will be affected by the rail line, and that meetings will be held in various parts of my constituency, which will be greatly affected, with British Railways, his Department, Kent County Council and the local authorities? Mr. Crosland I am obliged to the hon. Gentleman. Yes. Following my statement today, British Railways will at once resume consultation with the county and districts, and my Department will be involved in that. (We confirm that such consultations are now taking place. Ed.) X

#### Questions and answers

SSE Secretary of State for the Environment.

An asterisk denotes an oral answer; those not so marked were written.

#### 1973

19th December Railway rolling stock Mr. David Steel (Roxburgh, Selkirk and Peebles) asked the SSE what percentage of the total British Rail expenditure was spent on renewing the old passenger-carrying rolling stock in the years 1970, 1971 and 1972; and what proportion is to be allocated for this use in future. Mr. Peyton In 1970 15 per cent; in 1971 14 per cent; and in 1972 12 per cent. It is for the Railways Board to make recommendations on the future composition of the investment programme.

#### 1974

31st January Railways (London study) Mr. Guy Barnett (Greenwich) asked the SSE when he expects the London rail study to be completed; and whether it will be published by his Department. Mr. Peyton The study should be completed in the late summer; publication will be considered then.

(5th February in "Hansard" of this date appeared the list of railway grants which was omitted from the issue of 28th January, despite the statement by Mr. Peyton that it was appended to his written answer made on that day. (see pp. 9-10 of the last progress report) )

6th February High-speed trains Mr. Dempsey (Coatbridge and Airdrie) asked the SSE when high-speed trains will come into operation in the United Kingdom. Mr. Peyton The high-speed diesel train is due to come into full commercial service in 1976.

WHAT OTHER SOCIETIES ARE DOING

✗ The Defenders of Kent, a group of Kentish people, aim to protect their towns, villages and countryside from the damaging effects of the Channel Tunnel. Unlike the Railway Invigoration Society, they are not wholeheartedly in favour of the Tunnel. However, we are giving them our official support, because they say that, if the Tunnel must be built, the road terminal at Cheriton (near Folkestone) is unnecessary and that it would make better sense for cars and freight to be carried on high-speed trains routed direct from all over the country, using the existing rail network. The Defenders need £25,000 to carry on their campaign. Donations may be sent to their hon. treasurer at Orcombe, Peckham Bush, Tonbridge, Kent. ✗

Tenterden Railway Co., Ltd. According to "Tenterden Terrier", the journal of this company, "on Sunday, 3rd February, the first fare-paying passengers for just over 20 years were able to travel by train from Tenterden, as the 11.30 a.m. service made its departure" to Rolvenden, although it is intended to extend the service eventually to Bodiam. A very successful service has been run on subsequent Sundays, moreover, as stated in the "Terrier", a Saturday service was "intended for the early spring, and then, with a short break, for the remainder of the summer season." Further details from: Mr. Simon Green, Secretary, Tenterden Railway Co., Ltd., Tenterden Town Station, Post Office no.1, Tenterden, Kent, TN30 6HE.

Scottish Association for Public Transport has published a memorandum (no. 73/4) on "Communications to the Moray Firth: expenditure priorities, 1974-9". This refutes the official case for a new road at a cost of £43m. between Perth and Inverness and argues that greater emphasis should be placed on the alternative rail and water facilities. Copies (20p. each) are obtainable from Membership Secretary, Mrs. H. Broadbent, of 92 Hillview Drive, Clarkston Glasgow, G76 7JD.

✗ Transport 2,000 We particularly direct the attention of our readers to the spring 1974 issue of the newsletter of this organisation. This contains much useful information on the structure plan which, under local government reorganisation, each new county council must draw up for its area. The structure plan, which covers all aspects of planning, must contain a section on all forms of transport, including railways. The article explains how a structure plan will be drawn up and submitted for approval to the Department of the Environment. Explanation is given of the important right which the public has to participate in the making of such a plan. Copies of the newsletter are obtainable from the Press and Publicity Officer of the RIS - Mr. R.V. Banks, of 121, Ashford Road, Bearsted, Maidstone, Kent - or from the headquarters of the Transport 2,000 at 9, Catherine Place, London, SW1E 6DX (no charge).

Transport 2,000, Scotland, has published a booklet entitled "Energy sources for Scottish transport." Although specially concerned with Scotland, the booklet is relevant to all Britain. Copies (20p. each) obtainable by sending a stamped, addressed envelope, with remittance, to -

The Rev. Donald Ross, 59 Elmbank Street,  
Glasgow, G2 4PY. ✗

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The editor will consider for publication letters on matters of general interest to members. Any opinions expressed, however, must not be taken as necessarily reflecting the official views and policies of the Society. The editor reserves the right to make "cuts". Letters should normally be signed by writers' real names. Only in exceptional circumstances, which must be clearly stated in a covering note, will a letter be accepted for publication under a nom de plume.

Folding bicycles

As one who enjoys a trip by train and a cycle ride to and from the station, I do find it regrettable that British Rail does not offer the cyclist more incentive to take his machine by rail.

As you may be aware, a cycle can be taken by rail for half the second-class fare, subject to a maximum of £3 single. This is fair enough for a full-sized machine, since cycles can take up a lot of room and can be somewhat of a handful - especially in the confines of a guard's van. What I consider to be quite unreasonable is the levying of the same fare for a folding Moulton-type cycle, of the kind advertised as compact enough to store in the boot of a small car or on the luggage rack of a railway train. I contend that a folding bicycle should be carried free of charge on the same basis as a folding pushchair. Both train and bicycle are compatible modes of transport and need to be promoted for all they are worth in present-day congested Britain. In my opinion, British Rail can do much to boost the use of both cycles and trains by granting this small concession. I would welcome readers' views on this.

D. W. Green,  
Westwood, Caxton End, Eltisley, Huntingdon,  
Cambridgeshire.

REPORTS FROM BRANCHES AND AREAS

BRANCHES

London and Home Counties

✓ X Stage one of the London Underground's new Fleet line, i.e., the section between Baker Street and Trafalgar Square, should be ready to open by 1977. But the remainder of the line - which it is planned to construct eventually to Lewisham, in south-east London - may not be finished for some years after that. Financial approval is awaited for the second stage of construction, between Trafalgar Square and Fenchurch Street.

Other news on Underground projects is as follows:- Hounslow-Hatton Cross, expected to be finished by July 1975; Hatton Cross-Heathrow Central by December 1976; Baker Street-Strand (Charing Cross renamed) 1977. X

Northolt Park (between Neasden and Northolt Junction), which was reprieved by the Department of the Environment in 1972, is being modernised and the old wooden buildings are to be replaced. Work is scheduled for completion by October.

Completion of the new station at Basildon (Essex), which had been expected by May, has been



delayed and it is not likely to open until August (see also progress report no. 97, December 1978 p.9).

Luton Town Football Club has suggested to British Rail that the Luton-Dunstable-Leighton Buzzard line, which passes alongside its ground, should be re-opened for football specials from Bedford, St. Albans, Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard.

✓ X Stoke Parish Council (Kent) is seeking the support of Medway District Council in pressing for the re-opening to passengers of the line between Hoo Junction (on the Gravesend-Strood line) and Grain (i.e., the Hundred of Hoo line). This line is still used by oil trains to and from Grain Refinery. X

The demolition of Brighton station, to be followed by a redevelopment scheme, has been approved by the Town Council.

✓ X It is understood that electrification of the line between South Croydon-Oxted-East Grinstead/Uckfield has been deferred until 1979. X

#### East Anglian

✓ X The Branch organised a meeting in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, on Saturday, 18th May, for all those interested in the re-opening of the March-Wisbech line to passengers. Much interest had already been shown by organisations and individuals, mostly in Wisbech. Among those present was Mr. Clement Freud, M.P., who gave a short talk. X

✓ X The pressure to re-open Magdalen Road station (Ely-King's Lynn line) continues. An RIS member organised a very successful meeting in the adjacent village of Watlington on 21st March. 81 people were present. British Rail has supplied the local ad hoc committee with census forms to ascertain probable usage if the station were re-opened. Some local people have also indicated their willingness to donate money towards the cost of making the station usable again. X

The Branch has studied the Norfolk Joint Structure Plan and is submitting evidence re public transport.

A Breckland Line Users' Association has now been set up for the Norwich-Ely-Cambridge service. Its first activity is the distribution of a newsletter and British Rail publicity material.

✓ X The Branch is pleased to note an improvement at last in the Norwich-Birmingham service as from 6th May, with slightly more trains and a cut in journey times. X

✓ X There has been local pressure for the re-opening of stations at Mellis (Norwich-Ipswich line) and Soham (Ely-Newmarket line). We are in contact with local people and are investigating further. British Rail's initial response on Mellis was discouraging; the parish councils of both Mellis and Soham are keen, however. X

✓ X Dower Wood, a Newmarket firm of grain merchants, have pioneered an experiment that could revolutionise the transport of grain within the Common Market. Instead of the usual costly method of importing grain by road and boat, the firm is now receiving it by rail and

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is exporting malting barley by the same method. ✕

### Wessex

Castle Cary station (Somerset), which hitherto has been served only by trains running between Bristol and Weymouth has, since 6th May, enjoyed a direct link with London, provided by two trains in each direction.

### West Yorkshire

✕ Before it ceased to exist on 31st March, Penistone Urban District Council was pressing for the re-opening of the electrified passenger service between Sheffield and Manchester via the Woodhead Tunnel, but this was refused by British Rail on the ground that such re-opening would duplicate the Hope Valley service.

Local pressure has been mounted for the re-opening as an unstaffed halt of Arthington station (Leeds-Harrogate line), owing to the lack of evening buses in the district. ✕

## AREAS

### North-Eastern England

Our correspondent in Newcastle-upon-Tyne reports:-

✕ It is now hoped that at least two years will elapse before the Haltwhistle-Alston line can be closed. This is because public meetings have failed to agree on the route for the promised alternative road and now a public enquiry is planned. It is ironic that, with the change of government, Mr. Geoffrey Rippon, M.P., is now amongst those asking for the May 1975 closure date to be extended. For the first time, the line is being used for regular summertime specials. Regardless of the closure situation, the South Tynedale Railway Preservation Society is going ahead with its plans. This society has rented the waiting room at Alston for use as a shop and has painted the station buildings at Slaggyford. ✕

✕ When the Riverside branch of the North Tyneside line closed last year, it was said that part of the line would be retained for freight only, with the remainder being kept on a care and maintenance basis. Despite this, the line was used for passenger train diversions for a short period on 10th March. Shortly after this happened, it was reported that production in Tyneside's major shipyard complex was being hit by bus chaos and that workers in the local yards had called in the local M.P., Mr. Geoffrey Rhodes. Mr. Rhodes has pointed out that he had warned that difficulties with buses might happen when the Riverside line closed, but the Tyneside Passenger Transport Executive had promised that the bus service would be able to cope. ✕

✕ In a report which he has submitted to the new Tynedale District Council, its planning officer has recommended numerous improvements in local transport. These include the re-opening of Fourstones, Gilsland and Greenhead stations, plus better co ordination of trains at Prudhoe and Hexham with bus services. Unfortunately, he does not urge British Rail to retain the Alston line. ✕

British Rail states that the all-night train service started on the North Tyneside as an experiment

two years ago has won a vote of confidence and will be continued.

As part of an iron ore service from Teesside Terminal (near Redcar) to Consett Steel-works, British Rail has re-opened the stretch of line between Washington and South Pelaw Junction. The new service replaces one which has operated during the past twenty years from Tyne Dock to Consett!

#### North Western England

✓ X Subject to certain conditions, the Department of the Environment has approved commencement of the design work for the Piccadilly-Victoria railway tunnel under Manchester city centre. X

On the Manchester-Wigan direct line (via Walkden), stations are now being improved, so that it would appear that the outlook for this line is brighter.

✓ X RIS member Mr. G. Nuttall (of Burnley) recently organised a petition (500 signatures) to Lancashire County Council asking it to subsidise either the re-opening to passenger traffic of the Colne-Skipton line or the provision of a stopping passenger service between Rose Grove (Burnley) and Todmorden. X

Councillor James Mason, of Blackburn, leader of the Labour group on the new Lancashire County Council, speaking at a meeting of the Highways and Transportation Committee recently, called for a close study to be made of the possibility of electrifying the Preston-Colne line, a maximum use of existing rail lines and the possible re-opening of a limited number of lines, among many ideas which he put forward for improving public transport in Lancashire.

The new North station at Blackpool has been built at a cost of £500,000.

✓ X In Liverpool, completion of the inner loop line is scheduled for early 1976. The excavation of the tunnel between Exchange station and Central (low level) station is more than half-completed and finishing of the link line between these two stations is expected to take place in late 1976. Electrification of the route between Central and Hough Green will start in May 1975 and of the Walton Junction-Wigan line in December of that year. In September 1976, work will start on electrifying the line between Rock Ferry and Hooton (possibly extended to Chester) and that from Bootle to Aintree. X

Parish councils in the area have formed an action committee to press for the re-opening of Beeston Castle and Tarpoley station (Chester-Crewe line) as an unstaffed halt. Cheshire County Council is carrying out preliminary investigations to establish whether a case exists for re-opening not only this station but others on the line.

#### Oxford

The Area Representative has a place on the Executive Committee of the Transport 2,000 Thames Valley Branch, which was inaugurated at the City Hall, Oxford, on 5th December last.

With effect from 6th May, two additional trains in each direction, stopping at all stations, run every weekday between Oxford and Moreton-in-Marsh.

✗ It is understood that British Rail has turned down a proposal by the local M.P. that the Radley-Abingdon passenger service should be re-introduced. The policy is to make Radley rather than Didcot the railhead for Abingdon, using the frequent bus service. From 6th May, more trains have been stopping at Radley. ✗

As from 24th March, the line from Marylebone to Banbury, with its branches from Princes Risborough to Aylesbury, Thame and Chinnor, switched completely from Western to Midland control.

#### OTHER NEWS

The Social Science Research Council has granted £4,417 to the Transport Studies Group of the Polytechnic of Central London to undertake a study into inter-urban transport outside the trunk inter-city routes. The Group will seek the co-operation of local authorities and bus and rail operators.

According to the spring 1974 issue of the Railway Development Association (Midland Area) development report (no. 75), development of the Birmingham New Street-King's Norton-Redditch line, originally planned to be ready by May 1976, has been deferred, owing to legal and constructional problems.

A new station on the Wolverhampton-Shrewsbury line to serve Telford New Town has been suggested.

British Rail has assured local authorities that no plans exist to withdraw any trains between Skipton and Carlisle and Skipton and Carnforth, although some singling of track may be carried out. 1976 is the centenary of the Settle to Carlisle Railway. British Rail has rejected a suggestion by Cumbria County Council that Kirkby Stephen station, on this line, should be re opened, because, it alleges, the station is too far from the town. However, British Rail suggests instead a bus service to Penrith, 24 miles distant!

From spring of last year, the run-round loop at Windermere station (in the Lake District) has been removed, so that no excursion trains have run to the station since that time. British Rail plans to build a new station, to incorporate a shopping precinct.

Approval has been given to a 75% Government grant for the £12½ million modernisation of the Glasgow Underground.

CORRECTIONS to last progress report p.1, penultimate paragraph, 1st line: "Hornsey" should read "Hamsey"; p.9, about half-way down page: 18th January" should read "28th January"

#### EDITORIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

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Mr.Purser is responsible for branch and area reports, Mr.Hipperson for all other matter. To ensure inclusion in the next issue (to be published in Sept.), material must be submitted to the appropriate editor so as to reach him by Sat. 20th July. Contributors are asked to note that this date is a week earlier than would normally be the case, owing to Mr.Hipperson's holiday dates, and their kind co-operation on this occasion would be much appreciated).

PROGRESS REPORT No. 99

MEMBERS ONLY SUPPLEMENT: ISSUE No. 19

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Reports

A booklet containing copies of the reports presented to the annual general meeting held in Gloucester on 27th April is enclosed.

Officers and National Committee, 1974-5

All vice-presidents, as shown at the head of the main progress report, were re-elected. The Very Rev. J.H.S. Wild, who was present, expressed, on behalf of himself and the other vice-presidents, appreciation of the honour.

The following officials were re-elected:-

M.P.L. Caton, Esq., Ph.D., as Chairman;  
J.M. Stanley, Esq., M.A., as General Secretary;  
A.J.C. Read, Esq., F.C.I.S., as Honorary Auditor.

The following was re-elected Treasurer:-

Mr. D. Maudlin, 4 Churchill Avenue, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 0BU.

The following were re-elected to the National Committee:-

Mrs R. Colyer; Messrs. R. V. Banks, J. W. Barfield, D. J. Bradbury,  
G. L. Collett, L. G. Hipperson, A. F. Johnson, R. Macqueen,  
N. P. C. Madsen, G. F. Manley, A. C. B. Mercer, H. R. Purser,  
H. G. M. Rogers, B. R. Sageman, P. G. Scott.

One new member was elected to the National Committee, viz:-

Mr. C. J. Kew.

One vacancy now exists on the National Committee. Under the Constitution, this may be filled by co-option.

In addition, all branch secretaries and area representatives are ex-officio members of the National Committee.

Subscriptions

The meeting empowered the National Committee to increase the annual subscription for ordinary members to £2 with effect from 1st January, 1975, and to increase other subscription rates in proportion.

## Annual general meeting, 1975

It was agreed that next year's annual general meeting should be held within the area of the West Yorkshire Branch, preferably at York.

### Executive Committee

It was agreed that the day-to-day running of the Society should continue to be carried out by a small Executive Committee.

### Resolutions

Details of the resolutions passed at the meeting are given in the main progress report, p.3. The following resolutions were deferred for consideration by the National Committee:-

- (1) The Government should be urged to group public institutions, such as social security offices and post offices, on railway land adjacent to railway facilities.
- (2) The Government should be urged to appoint a transport commissioner to each county council to ensure compliance with section 203 of the Local Government Act, 1972.

Re resolution no. 2, the National Committee decided at its meeting held on 8th May that members should be requested to keep a watchful eye on local authorities to see that a non road-biased transport planning policy is pursued.

## ORGANISATION OF THE SOCIETY

### Executive Committee

At its meeting held on 8th May, the National Committee decided that the Executive Committee should continue to comprise the three principal officers - the Chairman, Dr. M.P.L. Caton; the General Secretary, Mr. J.M. Stanley, M.A.; and the Treasurer, Mr. D. Maudlin - and Messrs. R.V. Banks and J.W. Barfield.

### Fares and Facilities Sub-Committee

This sub-committee will be set up ad hoc as required. Any members who would be willing to serve on the sub-committee should write to the General Secretary, 12 Westcombe Park Road, London, SE3 7RB.

### Appointment of officers

As required by paragraph 21 of the Constitution, the National Committee has elected from amongst its members the following officers:-

- Vice-Chairman: Mr. R. V. Banks, 121 Ashford Road, Bearsted, Maidstone, Kent.  
Asst. Secretaries: Mr. J. W. Barfield, 70 Alnwick Road, London, E16 3HN.  
Mr. P. G. Scott, 11 Duffield Close, Harrow, Middlesex, HA1 2LG.  
Membership Sec: Mr. D. J. Bradbury, 59 Dore Road, Dore, Sheffield.  
Press & Publicity Officer: Mr. R. V. Banks (address as above)  
Progress Report Editor: Mr. L. G. Hipperson, 24A Cable Road, Hoylake, Wirral, Merseyside, L47 2BD  
Progress Report Sub-Editor: Mr. H. R. Purser, 30 Staines Road, Feltham, Middlesex. TW14 0HD.  
Distribution Officer: Mr. H. G. M. Rogers, 64 Cowper Road, London, W7 1EJ.

## KNOW YOUR REPRESENTATIVE!

The following information supersedes that given in all previous members only supplements. As regards England and Wales, the local authority areas (counties and districts) mentioned are those created by the Local Government Act, 1972, and operative from 1st April 1974. Names of metropolitan counties are prefixed by an asterisk.

### BRANCHES

London and Home Counties Greater London, Essex (as far north as and including Dunmow, Braintree and Colchester), Surrey, Kent, West Sussex, East Sussex, Hertfordshire (as far north as and including Bishop's Stortford and Letchworth), Bedfordshire (as far as Sandy, in the north-east), Buckinghamshire (east of an imaginary line joining but excluding Buckingham, Aylesbury and High Wycombe), Berkshire (east of the railway line joining Reading, Wokingham and Sandhurst and including those places).

Branch Secretary: D.J. Martins, 54 Canonbury Road, London N1 2DQ.

East Anglian Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire (incorporating the former administrative counties of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely and Huntingdon and Peterborough), Essex (north of and excluding Dunmow, Braintree and Colchester), Northamptonshire (part, i.e., Corby and East Northants districts), Leicestershire (part, i.e., Melton and Rutland districts), Lincolnshire (part, i.e., South Holland and South Kesteven districts).

Branch Secretary: T.J. Garrod, 15 Clapham Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk.

Three Counties Gloucestershire and the united county of Hereford and Worcester.

Branch Secretary: J.H.M. Fawdry, 24 St. James Street, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL52 2SH.

Wessex Boundaries: Bridport, Yeovil, Westbury, Newbury, Reading, Aldershot, Havant and the coast (including the Isle of Wight and all these towns except Reading)

Branch Secretary: J.C. Honeysett, Willingdon, Broadoak, Botley, Southampton, SO3 2EO.

West Yorkshire \* West Yorkshire, \* South Yorkshire, North Yorkshire (part i.e., Craven, Harrogate, Selby and York districts)

Branch Secretary: L. Schofield, 177 Smithy Hill, Wibsey, Bradford, BD6 1JX.

### AREAS

Devon and Cornwall

Area Representative: position vacant.

North-Eastern England \* Tyne and Wear, Northumberland, Durham, Cleveland, North Yorkshire (part i.e., Hambleton, Richmondshire, Ryedale, Scarborough districts)

Area Representative: position vacant.

North-Western England (definition of area under review)

Area Representative: filling of vacancy under consideration  
by the National Committee.

Oxford Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire (west of an imaginary line joining and including Buckingham, Aylesbury and High Wycombe), Berkshire (where not covered by the London and Home Counties or Wessex branches), Wiltshire (where not covered by the Wessex Branch).

Area Representative: The Rev. T.C. Comber, 32 Alexandra Road, Oxford, OX2 0DB.

North and Central Wales Gwynedd, Clwyd, Dyfed (part, i.e., Ceredigion district, identical in area with the former county of Cardigan), Powys (part, i.e., Montgomery district, identical in area with the former county of that name), and that part of Shropshire which lies north of the Shrewsbury-Aberystwyth line and west of the Shrewsbury-Crewe line (including those two lines).

Area Representative: position vacant.

North of Scotland The counties of Caithness, Sutherland, Ross & Cromarty, Inverness, Nairn, Moray, Banff, Aberdeen.

Area Representative: F.G. Thompson, 31 Braeside, Balloch, Inverness.

#### RIS 21ST ANNIVERSARY

The Society's Publicity Sub-Committee is investigating proposals for a dinner to be held in London next year to mark our 21st Anniversary. A history of the Society is also being prepared.

#### BRITISH RAIL ALL-SYSTEMS TIMETABLE

We have sent a letter of congratulations to British Rail on the production of the new-style timetable. Later we shall be making our suggestions as to how this could be improved.

#### RIS NOTE PAPER

There is a shortage of RIS headed notepaper. Any members who have spare supplies of this or of our publicity leaflet are invited to send them to the General Secretary (address on p.ii).

#### OBITUARY

We very much regret to report the death of our member Mr. E.G. Dullforce, who was a victim of the recent Paris air disaster. Mr. Dullforce, a resident of Burnham-on Crouch, Essex, was Chairman of the Southminster Branch Line Standing Conference, in which capacity he had worked devotedly for the retention and development of the Wickford-Southminster line.

#### GRANT AID TO UNREMUNERATIVE RAILWAY PASSENGER SERVICES FOR THE YEAR 1974

Re the enclosed list of grants, we regret that we found it impossible to distribute this with the last progress report, as stated in the publication note. We apologise to members for the delay.

#### CORRECTION

In the enclosed booklet of reports presented at the AGM, we regret the obvious error in the final paragraph of the Membership Secretary's report that "48 members died or failed to renew their subscriptions." Of course, this should read: "48 members resigned or . . . . ."