

RIS

Railway Invigoration Society

for the retention and modernisation of railway services

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No. 100

SEPTEMBER 1974RAILWAYS ACT, 1974

✓x On 31st July, the last day on which Parliament sat before it dispersed for the summer recess, the Railways Bill, 1974, received the royal assent.

The Act is almost entirely concerned with finance. European Economic Community regulations 1191/69 and 1192/69 require each member of the Community to ensure that an adequate railway passenger service is provided in its territory and that railway undertakings are compensated for operating unprofitable passenger services which are retained for social or economic reasons. ✓ In accordance with these regulations, Britain's railways will receive a block grant limited to £900 million over a period of five years. (Subject to House of Commons approval this amount may be increased to £1,500 million). This lump sum replaces the annual total of grants of just over £80 million provided under section 39 of the Transport Act, 1968. The provision of grants for unremunerative lines on a line by line basis is thus replaced by a blanket subsidy. This removes the problem of allocating costs for individual grants, as required by the Cooper Brothers' formula, which had proved so unsatisfactory since 1968. To that extent, the change in the method of making grants meets with our approval. However, we consider that money granted to British Rail should be earmarked for specific purposes (e. g. track, station improvements, new rolling stock) rather than merely being paid to offset a bad annual debt. Otherwise there is a danger that inefficiency and bad management will be encouraged and that a return to the pre-1968 situation will be produced.

We support the provision in the Act to empower the Secretary of State for the Environment to make grants to persons outside the British Railways Board towards the construction of facilities for rail freight haulage, private sidings, depots and other equipment. It is understood that this is the first time that subsidies have been provided for freight and it especially pleases us, as in our book, "Railways in the Seventies", published last year, we advocated the redevelopment of private siding traffic.

While we are delighted at the substantial increase in the amount of money which the new Act permits to be granted to British Rail, we consider that far more is needed if the railways are to provide an improved standard of service and to receive an increase in traffic rather than to just mark time. Much more money could, and should, be found by a drastic transfer to rail of funds earmarked for motorway construction. x

SIX LINES REPRIEVED IN ONE DAY!

✓ X Mr. Mulley, Minister for Transport, is to be heartily congratulated on the instant action which he took under the Railways Act, 1974.

In a written House of Commons reply on 31st July, he said : "The Secretary of State for the Environment has decided that it is in the public interest that current action on the following closure cases should cease and that the services should be covered by the first obligation to operate a railway passenger network which I shall be imposing on the Railways Board under clause 3 of the Railways Bill, which receives the royal assent today:-

Cambrian Coast; Kyle of Lochalsh-Inverness; Ashford-Hastings; Bedford-Bletchley; Wimbledon-West Croydon; and Stockport-Stalybridge.

Apart from the Haltwhistle-Alston closure,* which will proceed on the basis announced by the Secretary of State to the House on July 5, it is not possible as yet to come to a final decision on the other outstanding cases.

These are :-

Colchester-Sudbury; Maiden Newport-Bridport; Runcorn-Helsby-Chester; Gloucester (Eastgate) station; and East Brixton station.

These services will, of course, be included in the railway passenger network which I shall be grant-aiding from January 1 next while they remain under review" X

* (see p. 11 of this report. Ed.)

ASHFORD-HASTINGS LINE

✓ X A press conference was held in the Town Hall, at Rye, East Sussex, on 30th July, at the invitation of the Town Mayor of Rye, to launch a big publicity drive for the Ashford-Hastings line. Among those who attended was Mr. R. V. Banks, Press and Publicity Officer of the Railway Invigoration Society. This was a joint effort by British Rail, local authorities and the Ashford-Hastings Rail Users' Association. (The RIS contributed to the costs incurred by the latter body). The event was a great success and, although the line was reprieved the very next day (!), it cannot be considered to have been a waste of time, as it is evident that tremendous support has been secured for the future use of the line. X

CHANNEL TUNNEL RAIL LINK

✓ X During recent months, there has been much organised opposition to the proposed high speed rail link between London and the Channel Tunnel, particularly in Tonbridge.

The views of the Railway Invigoration Society on this subject have been admirably expressed in a letter from its Vice-Chairman, Mr. R. V. Banks, which was published in the Kent Messenger of 28th June. The letter appeared in the Kent and East Sussex Courier. The full text was as follows :-

" Having attended several of the meetings along the proposed high speed rail link, the

anxieties of the people living on or near the route are fully appreciated.

However, there are certain facts which must be recognised by everyone.

Firstly, because of its proximity to the Continent, there will be a growing volume of both passenger and freight traffic through the South East and through Kent in particular.

Secondly, this traffic will grow whether a channel tunnel is built or not.

The problem is to minimise the environmental effect on our houses and countryside. This can only be achieved by transferring as much of the traffic as possible to the railways. The environmental effects of increasing juggernaut and other road traffic would be horrific.

Therefore, objectors to the proposed rail link should concentrate their efforts on constructive suggestions for an improved rail link and if a better, although more costly, link can be shown to be feasible then the local authorities should be prepared to help financially. After all, without the rail link the cost of new access roads to the tunnel will be colossal and far more people will suffer environmental disturbance." ✕

One of our honorary members, Mr. John Ogilbie, has produced a scheme for an alternative Channel Tunnel rail link through Paddock Wood. He maintains that existing railway lines between Edenbridge and Smeeth could be converted to take high-speed trains. Local services could run on new lines on either side. The scheme would cause the minimum of environmental damage and demolition and acquisition of property. The problem of integrating local and high-speed services is solved by means of a system of flyovers and loops.

According to an announcement made in the House of Commons by the Secretary of State for the Environment (Mr. Anthony Crosland), the final decision on the route the Channel Tunnel rail link will take has been deferred until the end of this year. The reason given for the postponement is that more time is required to consider all the factors and issues. Mr. Crosland stated that the deferment had been agreed to by Mr. Richard Marsh, Chairman of the British Railways Board. He also said that Mr. Fred Mulley, the Minister of Transport, would be meeting local authorities for further discussions about possible routes. Subject to the time that the final decision is made, a Bill is likely to be put before Parliament in November. ✕

IN PARLIAMENT (continued from p. 8.)

* Mr. Douglas Henderson (Aberdeenshire, East) In his conversations with British Rail will the Minister ask the Board to reflect on the past folly of having closed railway lines which would now be beneficial to community? With reference to the developments that are taking place in north-east Scotland, will he ask the Board to carry out a feasibility study of the reopening of the Aberdeen to Peterhead and Fraserburgh lines, which would be beneficial to the whole community? Mr. Mulley There is not much benefit to be gained from trying to go over past history. When we consider the substantial sums that would be required both in terms of revenue support and investment, it is probably not easy to go back and reopen a lot of lines. I shall see that the hon. Gentleman's point is brought to the attention of the Board. (It is regretted that this feature is shorter than usual, owing to the delayed appearance of "Hansard" through industrial disputes. Ed.)

OXENHOLME-WINDERMERE RAILWAY PASSENGER SERVICE

As mentioned in the last progress report, the run-round loop at Windermere station (Cumbria) was removed in spring, 1973, so that no excursion trains had run to the station since that time. However, we are very pleased to record that Transport 2,000 (North-West) ran a special DMU train from the Preston area to Windermere on Sunday, 30th June, to show that there is still a demand for a through service to the Lakes. The venture was successful, not only because of the cheap fares - £1 for adults and 60p for children - but also by reason of the associated attractions, which included stops at Burneside and Staveley - from where National Park wardens arranged rambles - and connections with Sealink ships to Ambelside and Lake Side, trips being provided at reasonable rates.

The Railway Invigoration Society has been in correspondence with the Transport Users' Consultative Committee for the North-West Area regarding the reduction of facilities on this line, in particular its downgrading to single track and the removal of run-round facilities at the terminus. This means that locomotive-hauled trains can no longer reach Windermere. We pointed out to the Tucc that this has caused a severe reduction in the quality of rail services offered to excursionists from other parts of the country, as their trains are no longer able to reach Windermere and have to deposit them at a far less convenient point, quite possibly outside the National Park. We also urged the provision of a Sunday service on the line, in view of the vast potential traffic which must surely exist in this very popular holiday area and must be considerably boosted by the completion of the west coast main line electrification scheme.

The Secretary to the Tucc has told the RIS that, at a meeting of the Committee, a British Rail representative said that "following an extensive cost analysis of the system, due to changed circumstances of the west coast electrification scheme, and bearing in mind that excursion trains run only for a limited period during the summer, the turn-round facilities had been taken out of service at Windermere. To replace, or even retain them, was a very high cost factor, particularly in view of the number of locomotive-hauled trains involved."

Members of the Tucc agreed with the view of the RIS that a Sunday service should be provided on the line. However, the Committee was informed by a British Rail representative that, if Cumbria County Council wished to have such a service provided, British Rail would be only too pleased to meet this requirement, but that the Council would have to pay for it. The representative pointed out that the Council have the power to do so under the Local Government Act, 1972.

✓ X AMERICAN RAIL ENTHUSIASTS TOUR BRITAIN

Britain-by-Rail Tours, an American organisation, held its first all-first class, all-rail tour of England, Scotland and Wales from 30th May to 13th June. The itinerary covered Plymouth, Bristol, Shrewsbury, North Wales, the British Rail technical centre at Derby, York, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Inverness, Dover and London. The leader of the party was Mr. Otto Janssen, Executive Vice-President of PTJ Publishing Inc. and a director of the National Association of Railroad Passengers.

At the end of the tour, Mr. Janssen was entertained to lunch by two members of the Publicity Sub-Committee of the Railway Inivogration Society. In the evening, he went to the home of RIS Chairman, Dr. M. P. L. Caton, for dinner. Mr. Janssen told Dr. Caton that he had been very impressed with British Rail, especially with the inter-city services which he contrasted with the run-down state of US passenger services. He interviewed Dr. Caton "in depth" and said that he intended to publish the result in the next issue of Passenger Train Journal. X

DREADFUL WARNING FROM USA

Mr. Otto Janssen, Managing Editor of Passenger Train Journal (29, East Broad Street, Hope-
well, New Jersey, 08525, USA) has sent us details of "what attrition of rail service and emphasis
on highway transport have done to the United States".

He says that "a few statistics may be enlightening".

" - By official US Department of Transportation figures, more than \$400 million a week is
spent in this country on the upkeep and construction of roads and highways.

- Highways accidents took 54,800 lives in 1970. They caused 4,983,000 injuries. They
resulted in an economic loss of \$16.5 billion. The totals are higher for 1971 and 1972.

- As highways continue to spread, under the impetus of the Highway Trust Fund, construc-
tion costs continue to climb. In some urban areas, where homes and businesses must be bulldozed
to make way for highways and freeways, the cost per mile runs as high as \$50 million and more.

- It is estimated that the more than 100 million autos on American roads today pour some
200 billion pounds of pollutants into the atmosphere each year.

X - Many areas of the country that once were green and tranquil are now littered with
motor inns, hot-dog stands, bowling alleys and other assorted emporia, attracted there by what
our highway lobbyists like to describe as our 'magnificent' interstate highways. This 40,000-
mile system, much of it redundant and unwanted, costs the taxpayers some \$6 billion a year.
Greeted as a blessing when the massive highway construction program began under the Eisenhower
administration, it is now being resisted by citizen groups in many parts of the country as the bull-
dozers plough through parks, forests, quiet villages and densely-populated urban areas. " X

"In this country, the prevailing philosophy in high places seems to be that rail service must
pay its way (overlooking that highway and air subsidies are an enormous drain on public funds).
Those who call the shots fail to see, or refuse to see, that rail transport is, or should be,
regarded as a public service, subsidized if necessary in the same way that schools, the postal
service and the public health (in the UK, anyway) are subsidized."

X "We urge that those favoring even a partial dismantling of Britain's envied rail system
should make a visit to the United States first. They shouldn't count too much on travelling by
rail, however. Our once 20,000 daily trains have been reduced to around 200." X X

"CHANGING DIRECTIONS"

In June there appeared one of the most outstanding reports on the problems of transport in this country - both public and private - that has ever been published. This is "Changing directions: the report of the Independent Commission on Transport" (Coronet Books: /Hodder Paperbacks), which, at 75 pence per copy, is excellent value, for it is crammed with facts, figures, diagrams and references.

For the first time an independent body has examined in depth all modes of transport in Britain in all their aspects - economic, environmental, in their use of land, energy and other resources, and, in particular, social justice.

According to a publicity leaflet issued by Coronet Books, the members of the Commission, who worked under the chairmanship of The Rt. Rev. Hugh Montefiore, Bishop of Kingstone on Thames, "cover a wide range of professional discipline". They argue from the known facts and from little known statistics. The strength of their case is that so many arguments point in the same direction. Not being accountable to any private or public body, with no vested interest in any one mode of transport, they have spoken objectively and independently".

"Transport already consumes roughly one-fifth of the nation's total output, one-fifth of its supplies of useful energy and nearly a quarter of its oil. In twelve years its spread of concrete and construction has swallowed an area the size of Oxfordshire and one million people have been killed or seriously injured on the road."

"The Commission recognised the advantages of the motor car. It can confer personal mobility, a freedom and ease of movement and wealth of opportunity. Holidays, recreation and social life can depend upon it. Similarly, commercial firms often prefer the flexibility of private lorry to the railway system. These are facts of life. But, at the same time, the advantages are purchased at a huge sacrifice of the riches of life and even life itself. The true costs are seldom counted".

The Commission was helped in its work by a large number of individuals and public and private organisations, including the Railway Invigoration Society. X

RIS COMES OF AGE NEXT YEAR

In 1975 the Railway Invigoration Society will reach the twenty first anniversary of its foundation in 1954. This important occasion in its history will be marked by a dinner at the Charing Cross, London, on Friday, 25th April, when it is expected that several well-known personalities in the transport world will be present. Further details will appear in our next issue.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 1975

The twenty second annual general meeting of the Railway Invigoration Society will be held in London on Saturday, 26th April, 1975. It is hoped to give further particulars of the arrangements in our next issue.

NEW CORPORATE MEMBERS

We welcome the following new corporate members :-

Mansfield District Council (Nottinghamshire)

Suffolk Coastal District Council

Borough of Rhuddlan (Clwyd, Wales)

Wisbech and March Railway Action Committee

IN PARLIAMENT

Selections from the official reports

House of Commons

Questions and answers

SSE = Secretary of State for the Environment.

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

13th May Rock Ferry to Hooton railway Mr Bates (Bebington and Ellesmere Port) asked the SSE whether plans have been submitted to his Department for the electrification of the Rock Ferry to Hooton railway line; and what decision he has made. Mr. Mulley I understand an application for infrastructure grant on the cost of this scheme was rejected in October, 1973, because there was no prospect of accommodating it in the public expenditure programme before the new transport block grant system begins on 1st April, 1975. It will now be for the metropolitan county council (Merseyside. Ed.) to decide whether to allocate resources to the project in its transport policy and programme.

16th May Railway (private sidings) Mr. Cryer (Keighley) asked the SSE how many private railway sidings connected to British Rail were in use in 1970, 1971, 1972 and 1973, and what is the number in use at the latest available date. Mr. Carmichael The information is as follows :- 1st January, 1971 - 2,367; 1st January, 1972 - 2,205; 1st January, 1973 - 2,084; 1st January, 1974 - 2,059; at 31st March, 1974 - 2,055.

12th June Orbital railways Mr. Arthur Lewis (Newham, North-West) asked the SSE whether he has now had an opportunity of studying ring rail, and ring rail reviewed and the various papers and documents concerned with the same, sent to him by the hon. member for Newham, North-West; what action he has taken, or intends taking, in connection with his planning powers; and whether he will make a statement concerning this subject. Mr. Mulley The concept of orbital railways in London is being considered by the London Rail Study. I would not wish to reach conclusions before I have seen the report.

*12th June Advanced passenger train Mr Berry (Enfield, Southgate) asked the SSE when he expects the advanced passenger train to be introduced into service ... (Similar questions were asked, orally, by Mr. Teddy Taylor, Glasgow (Cathcart) and Mr. Leslie Huckfield, Nuneaton.Ed)

Mr. Mulley I am considering the Board's proposals for the construction of four prototypes, which could be in trial service from 1977.

* Railways (Scotland) Mr. William Hamilton (Fife, Central) asked the SSE if he is yet in a position to make a statement on investment plans for the modernisation and extension of the Scottish railway system. Mr. Mulley The electrification of the main line to Glasgow has been completed. I am considering the Board's programme for further work. Mr. Hamilton Is my right hon. Friend seized of the urgent need to get the matter right, in view of the increased prospect of getting more and more North Sea oil, with the consequent increase in heavy traffic, which is quite unsuitable for the road system? Will he make representations to the Scottish area of British Rail to ensure that there is more electrification on both fuel and environmental grounds? Mr. Mulley It is still a little too early to say whether fuel costs will substantially strengthen the case for continuing electrification programmes. I accept what my hon. Friend says about the importance of doing all that is reasonably possible to transfer freight from road to rail. I shall, as he wishes, discuss the Scottish aspects with the chairman of the Board.

(continued on p. 3.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(for conditions of acceptance, see last progress report, p. 8)

Petrol Rationing

May I suggest that petrol rationing, as proposed by Mr. Norman Atkinson, M. P., could be the answer to many of our current problems.

It could go a long way to ensuring the following benefits :-

- (1) Reduce our balance of payment deficits.
- (2) Save lives and injuries on the roads, incidentally saving money.
(Cost of accidents £550M. per annum according to Mr. Peyton, last November)
- (3) Reduce need for massive expenditure on new roads.
- (4) Improve the environmental and pollution problems caused by heavy road traffic.
- (5) Help to make public transport more viable.
- (6) Improve the Nation's health, because people would start walking more and there would be fewer heart cases and associated illnesses, saving money on the National Health Service.
- (7) Stop people spending so much money on motoring, which many cannot afford
- (8) Save energy.

Can anyone suggest a better way to alleviate so many of our present-day troubles "at a stroke"?

R. V. Banks, 121, Ashford Road, Bearsted, Maidstone, Kent.

Folding bicycles

As one who uses a pedal cycle and reads your publications, including the letter of Mr. D. W. Green (last progress report, p. 8), can I ask :-

Does anyone own or know of a type of cycle which will EASILY fold for transport on train, etc? We saw some made for Japanese airborne operations in the war. There were other types made before 1938. I cannot get one now.

I offered Mr. Green the chance to try my Moulton Stackaway. Anyone who thinks that is as easy to take on a train as an ordinary, MUCH LIGHTER, cycle can try.

My son (S. M. Dennis, B. Sc., (Hons.) Eng.) tells me light useful folding cycles can exist and in the countries where the motor car and juggernaut are not eliminating all else.

I was once on the design team of British railway locos. Most of my engineering experience is foreign.

J. A. Dennis, 56, Park House, Bridge Road, Welwyn Garden City, Herts.

REPORTS FROM BRANCHES AND AREAS

BRANCHES

London and Home Counties

✓✗ On Saturday, 6th July, the Branch organised a rail tour based on the use of the Southern "awayday Rail Rover" ticket, which, for 85p., gives unlimited travel for a day over the Southern suburban network, the southern boundary being the Guildford-Tonbridge line. The route followed was: Elephant and Castle, Peckham Rye, Battersea Park, West Croydon, Wimbledon, Effingham Junction, Guildford, Redhill, East Croydon, Edenbridge, Tonbridge, Waterloo, Charing Cross. The journey was a very interesting one. It enabled those taking part to revisit the West-Croydon - Wimbledon via Mitcham line, which is under threat of closure but seems, nevertheless, to have potential. Among the participants was Mr. P. E. Postgate, a former treasurer of the Society. ✗

✓✗ British Rail has sent to the Department of the Environment a report which proposes the construction of a tunnel from Chelsea Basin to South Croydon as part of the rail link to the Channel Tunnel. The reason for this proposal is to avoid difficulties which could arise in the building of a surface route. These include (1) the payments of compensation for land, extra noise and property depreciation, and (2) opposition from the communities affected. However, local opposition to the proposal has arisen at Balham and Clapham, because of possible damage to homes through train vibration in the tunnel, which would be only 60 ft. deep in some places.

A member has received a letter from British Rail in response to his suggestion for a White City-Willesden Junction service to connect with Channel Tunnel trains. British Rail wrote that a new service for the area could emerge from the London Rail Study and a Clapham Junction - Kensington Olympia-Willesden Junction service is already under consideration. This would also serve the White City and connect with the North London line. ✗

On 14th May, Dr. M. P. L. Caton, Chairman of the Railway Invigoration Society, gave a talk at a meeting of Enfield North (Bycullah) Young Conservatives. He spoke on the history of the RIS, railway developments over the past twenty years and the society's policy for the railways, past and future.

✓✗ The Branch has made a proposal for the re-opening of the Guildford-Horsham line. Local :

support has been received, including a favourable editorial in the Surrey Advertiser. The Chairman of the Branch has written to Surrey County Council to say that the Society would oppose any proposals to use the track-bed for road building. A circular letter has been sent to all those who have shown interest in the proposal. This suggests the holding in the area of an informal meeting to plan a full-scale campaign. ✕

East Anglian

✓✕ A 12% increase in passengers on East Anglian pay-trains during the last 12 months was announced by British Rail in July. This increase has been achieved by an extensive publicity campaign and because of the 10% reduction that can be obtained through using travel stamps. There had previously been a 5% annual drop in passengers on these services. The Divisional Commercial Manager of British Rail stated: "Now there is an even stronger case for retaining and even re-opening lines." ✕

✓✕ Following the successful RIS public meeting at Wisbech on 18th May, a special committee was set up to continue the campaign for the re-opening to passengers of the March-Wisbech line. This committee - the Wisbech and March Rail Action Committee - has become a corporate member of the RIS. It is planned to send out a questionnaire to all local residents this month. A dossier on the shortcomings of existing public transport in the area is being compiled. WAMRAC is also in contact with Cambridgeshire County Council. The Council has accepted in principle the idea of re-opening the line and is discussing the likely cost with British Rail. ✕

✓✕ The Branch has also been investigating the feasibility of restoring passenger trains on the Wymondham-Dereham-Fakenham and Wroxham-Aylsham lines. Much interest has been aroused and public meeting is planned for the autumn. Two RIS members attended a meeting of Dereham Town Council on 16th July to discuss the former proposal. ✕

✓✕ Enough money has now been raised by local people to re-open Magdalen Road Station. Some people have also volunteered to clean up the station. A survey held in May was answered by 700 people, of whom 188 said that they would use the station daily and 240 weekly. Even allowing for this being an optimistic estimate, there seems enough potential to make re-opening worthwhile. ✕

✓✕ Less encouraging is the news on the Cambridge-St. Ives line, where the local authorities have decided not to support financially the restoration of passenger services. Cambridge City Council has suggested improved bus services instead. Two RIS members have had letters published in the local press in disagreement with this idea. The Highways and Transportation Committee of the County Council agreed to "keep the option" of re-opening the line if circumstances change. The Cambridge Rail Action Group is certainly not giving up its campaign to get this line re-opened. ✕

The Branch continues to keep in contact with residents of Mellis (Norwich-Ipswich line) and Bealings (East Suffolk line) who are pressing for their stations to be re-opened. It is also submitting evidence on the Norwich Area Transportation Study, which virtually ignores rail

transport. Mindful of local opposition to the expansion of Norwich Airport, it is studying how the railways might reduce the need for expansion of internal flights by improving services from East Anglia to the Midlands and the North.

There is a proposal to move Lowestoft station to the west. This suggestion has been made from time to time over several years and another round of discussions is taking place between British Rail and the new local authority (Waveney District Council). At present, information on the proposal is sparse. However, if the new station were to be built only 100 yards short of the present one and contained the same range of facilities, there would seem to be no objections from the Society's point of view.

At Felixstowe British Rail is considering the provision of a new station on the Dock branch, next to the bus station in Langer Road. The existing station and a short spur leading to it would be closed.

West Yorkshire

West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive is considering the re-opening of certain lines and the provision of new bus/rail interchanges.

At an inquiry into the proposed by-pass at Otley on 25th June, it was suggested that the scheme should allow room for the relaying of a single track railway alongside the by-pass between Otley and Menston. This would restore the rail link between Otley and Leeds/Bradford which was withdrawn in 1965. ✕

AREAS

North-Eastern England

Our correspondent in Newcastle-upon-Tyne reports :-

✕ The Secretary of State for the Environment (Mr. Anthony Crosland) has confirmed that the Haltwhistle-Alston line will be closed when alternative bus services and road improvements have been supplied. In the meantime, a public inquiry is being held regarding the compulsory purchase order for land needed for the new road. There have been 13 objections to the scheme, including one from the local branch of Transport 2,000 ✕

✕ Tyneside's rapid transit scheme, now to be known as the Metro, continues to face problems. The original estimate was that the scheme would cost £65m., but it is now thought that this could soar to £95m. Also there is some doubt as to what proportion of the cost will be paid by the Government. Plans to use the old Silksworth Colliery (near Sunderland) as a test track have been withdrawn, as it runs through a heavily populated area and local residents were vehement in their objections. A disused colliery track at Backworth (Northumberland), which is on open land, has been substituted. Work is shortly to commence on the underground stations in Newcastle and it is predicted that this will cause traffic chaos. There is controversy over how bad this will be and what length of time will be involved. A study to see how the system could be extended to Sunderland should be completed by the end of the year, but any line in this

direction would be unlikely to be built for several years. ✕

British Rail claims success for its efforts to encourage more people to use the Tyne Valley railway line. It says that the measures taken, including the link-up of bus and rail services at Hexham and Haltwhistle, have led to an 18% increase in the number of passengers using the line. British Rail is also producing a free newsletter for the line; the first issue was to be distributed to 15,000 homes.

Northumberland County Council officials are expected to start investigations later this year on the possibility of re-opening some sections of the Blyth and Tyne line, including the branch to Morpeth. They also intend to review the future of several disused stations on the Newcastle-Carlisle line, the stretch of the east coast main line between Cramlington and Morpeth and the Riverside branch of the North Tyneside line.

A Swedish firm, Molynche, is opening a factory at an industrial estate in Morpeth. At a time when most companies seem to be totally committed to road haulage, it is a refreshing change to find this firm saying that it wants to buy another nine acres so that it can expand and have its own railway siding.

For many years Greatham (between Hartlepool and Stockton) had only a skeleton rail service. British Rail has experimented with a regular service, but this was withdrawn when the new timetable came into force in May.

North-Western England

✕ Greater Manchester Transport Action Group (57, Homewood Road, Manchester, M22 4DG) has published "Transportation planning and Greater Manchester", by Ken Child and Rita Oughton (50 pence). This study advocates the scrapping of grandiose motorway schemes and the substitution of public transport development, including the Piccadilly-Victoria railway tunnel. Between these two stations, an experimental bus link was introduced by the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (formerly SELNEC PTE) on 1st July. In the first month of operation, this service was patronised better than transport officials had expected. ✕

✕ British Rail has published a report to support its claim that loss-making suburban lines completely justify their existence because these save the community money in other directions, e. g., the avoidance of road congestion, longer journey times, higher vehicle operating costs and road accidents. The report has been based on a study of two Manchester suburban lines - those to Glossop and New Mills - by Mr. Christopher Foster, one of the transport economists on whose judgement the Victoria line was built under London. Figures are produced which prove that the net social benefits are higher than the subsidies which are being paid to keep the lines open. ✕

Another important report on a railway in the Greater Manchester area is one which has been produced by the Centre for Urban and Regional Research, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL (£2.25). This is entitled "A cost-benefit study of the Manchester to Buxton railway". It was written by Michael Roger Bristow and Francisco Rodríguez for the

information specifically of the Local Authorities' Joint Committee for Railway Services
(Manchester-Stockport-Buxton)

Lancashire County Council has submitted its first transport policy and programme statement to the Department of the Environment. This opposes any further rail cuts. It presses for more trains, improved stations and halts and the re-opening of some stations as unstaffed halts.

Central Lancashire Development Corporation has produced its outline plan for transport development. This requires the existing rail network to be exploited, with new stations at Ingol and Walton Summit and the re-opening of former stations at Midge Hall and Lostock Hall. Also proposed is the re-opening of the Preston-Longridge line as far as Grimsargh and the provision of a new underground station to serve Preston's growing Polytechnic.

At Bamber Bridge, Rishton and Rose Grove (Burnley) stations, on the East Lancashire line, British Rail, in conjunction with Lancashire County Council, is providing "park and ride" facilities, with free car parking. A more ambitious scheme, similar to those provided at Bristol Parkway and Alfreton and Mansfield Parkway, has been proposed for Balshaw Lane and Buxton station (between Wigan and Preston) (closed to passengers in 1969) by Transport 2,000.

Oxford

✓x The Society's membership in this area has recently subscribed to secure affiliation to the Thames Valley Divisional Group of Transport 2,000.

The Society is sharing in the application of pressure for the opening of a resited station at Kidlington (Oxford-Banbury line) - which seems likely to happen - and the re-opening for passenger traffic of the Oxford-Bletchley line. ✕

North and Mid-Wales

From 1st April, Chirk and Ruabon stations (Wrexham-Shrewsbury line) have been reduced to unstaffed halts.

THE SETTLE AND CARLISLE RAILWAY

✓x British Rail has approached the Yorkshire Dales National Park Committee for co-operation in the restoration of the local passenger service between Skipton and Carlisle, which ceased in 1970. The line is still used by express and special passenger trains and freight trains.

One of those most active in moves to get the local passenger service brought back is RIS member Mr. G. Nuttall, of 37, Bar Street, Burnley, Lancs, BB10 3DA. He used the trains to Horton, Ribbleshead, Dent, Garsdale or Kirkby Stephen every weekend for two years until they were withdrawn.

A train which was chartered by the Ramblers' Association for a special trip to Garsdale, Kirkby Stephen and Appleby ran in early June. It was fully booked (500 seats) more than two months in advance.

An exhibition to mark the centenary of the Settle and Carlisle line is being held this summer, and will be repeated next summer, at the National Park Information Centre, Clapham (served by Leeds-Morecambe passenger trains), while Settle Civic Society has organised a series

of events leading up to 1st May, 1976, the actual centenary of the passenger service. x

OTHER NEWS

Next year celebrations will be held to mark the 150th anniversary of the Stockton and Darlington Railway. From Easter, a replica of "Locomotion" will operate at the North of England Open Air Museum, Beamish, near Chester-le-Street, (postal address: Stanley, Co. Durham) while the original, now at Darlington station will be moved the short distance to North Road station.

Dismay has been caused at Skegness, because the latest Tourist Board maps omit the railway line to the town.

The retention of the 14-mile Louth-Grimsby freight - only line has been assured until 1979 with the signing of a contract between British Rail and ABM (Malting) for the movement of grain, chiefly malt. The contract also covers the movement of grain from Bury St. Edmunds (Suffolk), Knapton (Malton-Scarborough line) and Wallingford (Oxfordshire).

On the Doncaster-Cleethorpes line, the appearance of six stations is to be improved at a cost of £23,000. The stations are Thorne South, Brocklesby, Stallingborough, Healing, Great Coates and New Clew.

British Rail has launched a campaign of publicity for the 120-mile rail and ferry network in the new county of Humberside. The network has been named "Numberail".

On the Oxenholme-Windermere branch, Burneside and Kendal stations have been unstaffed from 18th June.

In South Wales, Neath station is to be rebuilt at a cost of £200,000 and Pontypridd station is to be modernised for £113,00 (50% grant from the Government in the latter case).

As last summer, a Sunday service (one train in each direction) is being provided from June to September between Edinburgh and North Berwick.

The Sunday electric train service which has been introduced on the Hamilton circle line has provided Blantyre, Hamilton and Bellshill with their first Sunday trains.

It is hoped that electric trains will be running from Glasgow to Ayr and Largs by 1978.

Irvine New Town Development Corporation is insisting that adequate rail access should be provided to the area.

Nine trains, working round the clock, (except Sundays) are now removing 1½ million tons of oil shale from Dean's Bing, near Livingston (West Lothian) to Shieldhall (Glasgow) where it will be used in the construction of stage II of the Renfrew Motorway. The operation is expected to take almost a year.

WHAT OTHER SOCIETIES ARE DOING

(Readers are asked to kindly mention this feature when writing to any of the addresses given below)

Scottish Association for Public Transport

This Association, in conjunction with the Wick Society, organised special events to cele-

brate the opening on 28th July, 1874, of the Far North line of the Highland Railway (Helmsdale - Wick / Thurso). Co-operation was received from British Rail, Scotland, and sponsorship from Caithness County Council, Sutherland County Council and the Highlands and Islands Development Board.

The most important event was the running of a special train from Inverness to Wick on Sunday, 28th July 1974. There was a halt of one hour at Dunrobin Castle, Sutherland, and a stay of four hours in Wick. Bus tours, in connection with the train, ran from Wick to Thurso and John O' Groats. On the train, Jack Rennie, previously on the Kyle observation car, gave an historical commentary.

The SAPT is attempting to sponsor, produce and distribute a Kyle line pictorial calendar for 1976. Anyone who could assist with the distribution of the calendar is invited to write to the Hon. Secretary of the SAPT (address below).

"Local transport in Scotland: future patterns and organisation" is the title of a recent SAPT publication. This may be obtained (price 50 pence per copy) from 125, Buchanan Street, Glasgow, G1 2JD.

Since 30th March, the Hon. Secretary of the Scottish Association for Public Transport has been RIS member Mr. F. H. Neville, of 351, Kingsway, Dundee, DD3 8LG.

Transport 2,000

✓ X A delegation from Transport 2,000, including Mr. R. V. Banks (Vice-Chairman and Press and Publicity Officer of the Railway Invigoration Society) met Mr. Fred Mulley, Minister of Transport, on 31st July. The delegates were well pleased with the results of their discussion with Mr. Mulley and to discover that there is now a genuine pro-rail feeling in Government circles. X

Prior to the meeting on 17th June of the Environmental Committee of Oxfordshire County Council to consider its final recommendations on the Council's draft transport policy and programme for 1975-6, the Executive Committee of the Thames Valley Divisional Group of Transport 2,000 issued the following statement:-

"A radical change of attitude on the part of all concerned with transport planning in the Council is called for if Oxfordshire is not to fall behind other areas which are dealing with transport problems in a realistic and urgent manner."

✓ X "The 1972 Local Government Act imposes a duty on councils to promote a co-ordinated and efficient public passenger transport system. Proposals for 1975 expenditure set aside over 96% for roads and car parks, whilst less than 4% is intended for public transport. This, in our opinion, is an insult to the thousands of people who have to rely on public transport services".

"In 1973 the Department of the Environment circulated councils imploring 'action now' on the movement and parking of lorries. Proposals in 1975-6 can only be described as 'ineffective' in light of the D. O. E. appeal and display a lamentable lack of urgency".

"The Council's attitude towards railways is astonishing. Not a single penny is earmarked for rail expenditure in spite of the widespread and persistent demands for improved passenger services in the county." X

Transport 2,000 in its first year of activity has published a number of reports and statements

nationally and in the regions. Some of the publications are free of charge. A full list may be obtained from 9, Catherine Place, London, SW1E 6DX.

In addition to those already mentioned in previous progress reports, the following members of the Railway Invigoration Society are officials of Transport 2,000 divisional (formerly regional) groups :-

Southern - Mr. L. F. Slade, 69, Cokeham Lane, Sompting, Lancing, West Sussex.

North of Scotland - Minute and Membership Secretary : Mr. F. H. Neville,
351, Kingsway, Dundee, DD3 9LG.

Warwickshire Conservation Society is pressing for the re-opening of the Nuneaton-Coventry line to local passenger services, so as to relieve traffic congestion. It is estimated that 45,000 commuters per day would use the trains. This idea has been agreed to by Warwickshire County Council. Details from The Coach House, Frankton House, Frankton, Rugby, Warwickshire.

Wirral Railway Circle is running a special train, "The North Yorkshire" on Saturday, 7th December. Route : Crewe-Stockport, Stalybridge-Huddersfield - Leeds to Whitby or Grosmont (for North York Moors Railway special train, probably steam-hauled throughout the 36 miles to Pickering and back). Full details, together with outline tour plans for 1975, available by sending stamped, addressed envelope (marked "The North Yorkshireman") to Wirral Railway Circle, Post Office Box No. 74, Bebington, Wirral, Merseyside, L62 2EL.

EDITORIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Editor : L. G. Hipperson, 24a, Cable Road, Hoylake, Wirral, Merseyside, L47 2BD
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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 December) material must be submitted to the appropriate editor by Saturday, 26th October.

PUBLISHED by the RAILWAY INVIGORATION SOCIETY

Chairman : M. P. L. Caton, Ph. D. , 10, Grosvenor Gardens, Upminster, Essex

General Secretary : J. M. Stanley, M. A. , 12, Westcombe Park Road, London, SE3 7RB

Membership Secretary : D. J. Bradbury, 59, Dore Road, Dore, Sheffield

RAIL CHARGES

A copy of resolution no. 3 passed at this year's AGM (see last progress report, p. 3) was sent to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who passed it on to the Department of the Environment. That Department has replied as follows:-

". The recently concluded review of railway policy has shown that the industry is basically unviable and that major savings could only be achieved by wholesale closure of services in certain areas. The Government recognise the social, economic and environmental importance of the railways and have promised to maintain the network on a national basis by providing the necessary financial support. Last year cash support to the industry totalled £173m. ; this year it is expected to exceed £300. The Railways Board has a duty to manage the industry as efficiently as possible and to minimise the demand on central government resources by containing its deficit as far as possible and to this end it has put forward proposals to increase customer charges. In recognition of its pledge to support public transport, the increases that have been approved by the Government are less than the level of inflation, so maintaining the industry's competitive pricing position. As part of its marketing policy, the Board will continue to make reduced rate tickets available. These include day returns, weekend returns, 17 day returns and economy returns for mid-week travel. "

SWEDISH STATE RAILWAYS

The Railway Invigoration Society has had the following correspondence with the Swedish State Railways:-

29th August, 1973.

The Director,
SJ Press Section,
Swedish State Railways.

Dear Sir,

I was interested to hear recently about the Swedish Government's policy statement regarding the transfer of freight traffic from road to rail. The achievement of such a policy in Britain is one of the stated aims of this Society. I should be very grateful, therefore, for details of how SJ will implement this policy, in particular with regard to wagonload traffic . . .

Yours faithfully,
(signed) Richard Macqueen
Press and Publicity Sub-Committee,

5th September, 1973.

Richard Macqueen, Esq.,
Railway Invigoration Society.

Dear Sir,

... The policy statement to which you refer was made by our minister of transportation Mr. Norling in a speech on the 5th of July. What he said was that the government next year (if the elections in a few days from now don't change the political situation in Sweden) will submit a bill to the parliament forbidding road transport over long distances, that is more than 250-300 kms.

... Swedish Railways have accepted the liberalistic policy in transportation, which was decided by our parliament in 1963 and which has not until now been modified. That is why we would not welcome any regulating measures, infringing the present liberalization. We believe in free competition on equal conditions and in our ability to make both ends meet. Last fiscal year, which was July 72-June 73, we actually show a small profit. So we think we can do without the regulations which Mr. Norling announced. How these regulations will be implemented is an open question ...

Yours faithfully,

(signed) Gösta Holvid.

BRITISH RAIL'S NEW TIMETABLE

The following is the text of correspondence between Dr. Caton, Chairman of the RIS, and The Rt. Hon. Richard Marsh, Chairman of the British Railways Board:-

27th June, 1974.

The Rt. Hon. Richard Marsh.

Dear Sir,

This Society's National Committee has asked me to write to you to express our appreciation of British Rail's new 'All System' timetable.

One of the major disadvantages of the former five separate volumes was the difficulty of planning rail journeys which traversed more than one region. To have all railway services, including cross-channel and continental connections, in a single volume is a very great asset and British Rail is to be congratulated on presenting the information in this way.

Yours faithfully,

(signed) M. P. L. Caton
Chairman.

3rd July, 1974.

M. P. L. Caton, Esq., Ph. D.,
Chairman, Railway Invigoration Society.

Dear Dr. Caton,

I have received your letter of 27th June and am pleased to know that you approve of the new timetable. I will pass on your comments to the Chief Executive (Railways)

Thank you for writing.

Every good wish.

Yours sincerely,
(signed) Richard Marsh.

"A RAILWAY AT ANY PRICE"

We direct the attention of members to an article under the above title which appeared in The Economist of 13th July, pp. 69-70. This was very anti-railway and contained many faulty and misleading arguments.

We are most concerned that such an influential periodical as The Economist should publish rubbish of this nature and we urge all our members to counter its effects in every possible way.

NEW SUBSCRIPTION RATES

As reported in the last members only supplement, this year's annual general 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. The National Committee has now decided that the new rates for other classes of members shall be as follows:-

Corporate bodies (including local authorities - except parish councils) ...	£4
Parish councils and voluntary bodies ...	£2
Registered students, members under the age of 18 and those over 65 ...	£1

HISTORY OF THE SOCIETY

The Publicity Sub-Committee aims to produce a history of the Society as part of the celebrations to mark our 21st anniversary. For this purpose, the Sub-Committee wishes to examine any records of the Railway Invigoration Society, particularly those which relate to the first ten years of its life. Minutes, agendas, notices, progress and other reports, publications and correspondence are among the types of material needed. To avoid unnecessary duplication, members are asked to get into touch in the first instance with our Press and Publicity Officer (Mr. R. V. Banks, of 121, Ashford Road, Bearsted, Maidstone, Kent: Tel. Maidstone 37579), giving him brief details of what they are prepared to lend to the Sub-Committee.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 1975

Although it was agreed at this year's AGM that next year's AGM should be held within the area of the West Yorkshire Branch, preferably at York, the National Committee feels that to ask members to attend the 1975 AGM at a northern venue and, during the same year, to be present at the 21st anniversary dinner in London would create too much a demand upon their time and pockets as well as being detrimental to a satisfactory attendance at both events. Therefore, as announced in the main progress report (p. 6.), plans are now going ahead for the dinner and AGM to be held in London during the same weekend next April.

We are sorry to disappoint those members who were looking forward to going to Yorkshire for the annual general meeting, but we believe that they will understand the reasons for the National Committee's decision to change the venue.

RAILWAY ACTION CALENDAR

Two members of the National Committee, Messrs. P. G. Scott (one of the RIS assistant secretaries) and G. L. Collett, are concerned with efforts to publish a quarterly calendar (proposed title as above) with the object of co-ordinating the activities of railway pressure groups in the London area. The London and Home Counties Branch of the RIS fully supports the idea. Further details may be obtained from Mr. Scott, of 11 Duffield Close, Harrow, Middlesex, HA1 2LG.

AMMUNITION

✓ X The Daily Mail of 1st May included an article entitled "The shocking cost of a car per year". According to this, a car may cost "more to run than a mortgage on a new home." A set of figures presented in the article show that "an average-sized new family car" costs £874 a year to run. This compares with £686 at the same time last year, i. e., the rise in twelve months is almost £200. X

Many useful facts and figures are contained in three pamphlets obtainable free from Transport 2000, at 9 Catherine Place, London, SW1E 6DX. Titles are "British Rail, 1975-2000", "Energy in transport" and "An electrifying case."

PAPER CONSERVATION

In view of the worsening paper shortage and ever-rising prices of paper and envelopes, there is a tremendous need to save both paper and money.

One simple way of doing this is to use the envelope re-use labels produced by the Conservation Society. The price of the labels, including postage, packaging and VAT is :- 26 pence per 100; £2.30 per 1,000; £20 per 10,000.

Orders with remittance, should be sent to Conservation Books, 28 Bearwood Road, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG11 4TD.