

California Rail News

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Frankfurt-Köln ICE Line Open

Inaugural of a new high-speed InterCity Express (ICE) connection between Frankfurt and Köln (Cologne) has transformed German rail travel by removing one hour. The high speed Köln-Frankfurt line along the A3 autobahn began service August 1 as an isolated shuttle on two-hour headways between the two cities. Because European timetable changes are infrequent, the integration of the route into the German rail network will wait until the December 15 network-wide change. On that date, the new line becomes the "centerpiece of the European high-speed network," says Hans-Gustav Koch, the Deutsche Bahn (DB) marketing chief.

The 177 kilometer line is notable because its aggressive engineering through the Taunus Mountains pushes the limits with maximum grades of 4 percent. The passenger-only bypass of the congested Rhein rail corridor cost six billion euros, in addition to two billion euros for new trains. [The euro currently is about par with the dollar]. DB projects Köln-Frankfurt corridor ridership will rise about 25 percent by 2003 and about 50 percent by 2007 compared to today. The previous Rhine line will continue to be served by conventional IC and EuroCity trains.

On the first day of regular service on the new ICE route, reports of smoke in one of the tunnels near Idstein delayed two runs in each direction by about one hour. Inspection of the tunnel found no fire. Delays persisted through that evening, but the line was

Hartmut Mehdorn, Board Chairman of Deutsche Bahn AG, carries the marketing message of one hour savings at the July 25 ceremonial first run. Photo: DB AG/Kramer

released the next morning for normal traffic.

First week reports are that passengers are fairly enthusiastic. Business commuters save time with the new route and direct connection to Frankfurt airport, making price considerations secondary. Many passengers took advantage of new laptop hookups. The 98 leather first class seats were almost completely sold out, a railway spokesperson said. Despite the forced transfers at the two endpoints, peak trains were two-thirds filled.

German rail passengers, however, are notoriously picky about details of changes, and have criticized DB for fare increases, surcharges and a new reservations requirement, which applies from December 15. The cost of a second class Köln-Frankfurt ticket rose about one-third from 39 to 53.60 euros. This is because of the surcharge (and the DB's popular 50% discount card doesn't apply to it). For riders with the BahnCard the ICE trip costs 34.10 euros, 77 per cent higher than the 19.30 euros via conventional service along the Rhein. Loyal customers especially resent the penalty.

Berlin's *Die Welt* criticized the new line as being "braked by local politics." To ease opposition in the Rhineland-Palatinate, route of the high speed segment, stops at Limburg

an der Lahn and Montabaur im Westerwald have been added to the timetable. Each stop costs ten minutes because of deceleration, acceleration and station dwells.

The German rail passenger association

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**HELPING PUBLIC
LEARN TRAINS**

TRAC
Train Riders
Association
of California

926 J Street, Suite 612
Sacramento, CA 95814

Address Correction Requested

DB Saves an Hour

(Continued from Front Page)

Pro Bahn has lauded the opening of the line, while criticizing fare increases, the addition of Montabaur and other details. For example, it is unclear how DB will improve its restrictive Fulda-Frankfurt-Mannheim route.

At the Köln inaugural ceremony, DB Board Chairman Hartmut Mehdorn said "this is a big day for German Rail. With this new connection, long-distance traffic takes a giant step forward within Germany and the European high-speed network. We are approaching our goal of becoming the fastest travel mode up to 500 kilometers." 700 VIPs accompanied DB's Mehdorn and Federal Transport Minister Kurt Bodewig on the opening trip.



The wife of the Federal Chancellor, Doris Schroeder cut the ribbon. Later, DB illustrated its ad slogan "gives you one hour" by hosting 3500 guests at a one hour concert by pop group Sasha, at Roncalli Plaza next to the cathedral. Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder congratulated DB's Mehdorn after the event.

August 1 also marked the beginning of the end for German dining cars. The ICE-3 equipment on the Köln-Frankfurt line have Bistros instead of the classic "Mitropa" dining car service. "We are re-equipping our trains to adapt to the market", says Koch, German Rail marketing manager. "If the customer doesn't come to the diner, we must come to the customer." Studies show that more than half of passengers eat on board, but only 15 per cent buy food on the train. Fewer than five per cent visit the diner and less than one percent eat a main course. DB says riders leave their seats reluctantly, and because they view prices on board as too high, food sales keep dwindling.

The railway wants to reverse this trend. With space at a premium on fully occupied trains, DB plans to bring meals on carts directly to riders' seats. By December timetable change, conversion of the ICE-3-Fleet is to be complete. Plans are to rebuild the last diner by 2005. Koch says the trains have to be redone anyway to create more space for second class travelers, who are outstripping available seating on ICE trains.

STATION HOST PROGRAM EXPANDS

by Alan C. Miller
TRAC Executive Director

The California Station Host program began its trial run in March 2001 at the Emeryville Station with the official blessing of Amtrak and concurrence of the Transportation Communication Union. Its expansion was subsequently authorized in Oakland, Martinez, San Francisco, and Sacramento.

Developed by TRAC member Doras Briggs and headed by TRAC member Ray Ahearn, the program is proving a success for Amtrak, for passengers, and for the Hosts.

What is a Station Host? A volunteer who likes people and who, after successfully completing a training program and donning the official cap and badges, spends his or her time helping waiting riders. "It's fine to like trains, but the emphasis must be on the people in the station. We need volunteers who enjoy talking with and helping rail travelers by answering peripheral questions for which the busy Amtrak staff have little or no time," said Briggs. "For a first time rider through the station, just knowing where to catch the bus to San Francisco or how to get to a BART station, or the location of an ATM machine, can be a great relief."

Hosts learn the schedules in their stations so they can help tell people which train to board or which train connects to which bus. They help Amtrak personnel but are specifically banned from performing employees' duties. Hosts never interfere with employee actions; they are there to assist.

Each station presents its own challenges and unique personality. The Oakland Station Host program hasn't yet attracted as many volunteers as Emeryville despite its attractive location adjacent to Jack London Square and the Estuary. (If you're lucky, Oakland Mayor Jerry Brown, whose home is in the block across the street, may drop by). Doras hopes TRAC's publicity will encourage more people to volunteer for Oakland.

Martinez has always been a prime train watching spot for local railfans. A small subgroup of these fans has assisted confused passengers in need of directions or information for many years. Now, under the guidance of Assistant Scheduler Vern Spaulding, the Station Host program is proving a natural fit for this station. Those local fans who always enjoyed working with the public have completed the training course, donned the official cap, and now earn the appreciation of the station staff by helping out. The beautiful new station, just west of the old station, offers a pleasant atmosphere. An abundance of bus connections to local transit and other Amtrak locations makes those with a good head for details and rail oper-



(From left) President Ray Ahearn, Vern Spaulding, Doras Briggs, Mike Fearon, and Greig Pirie

ations invaluable partners at Martinez.

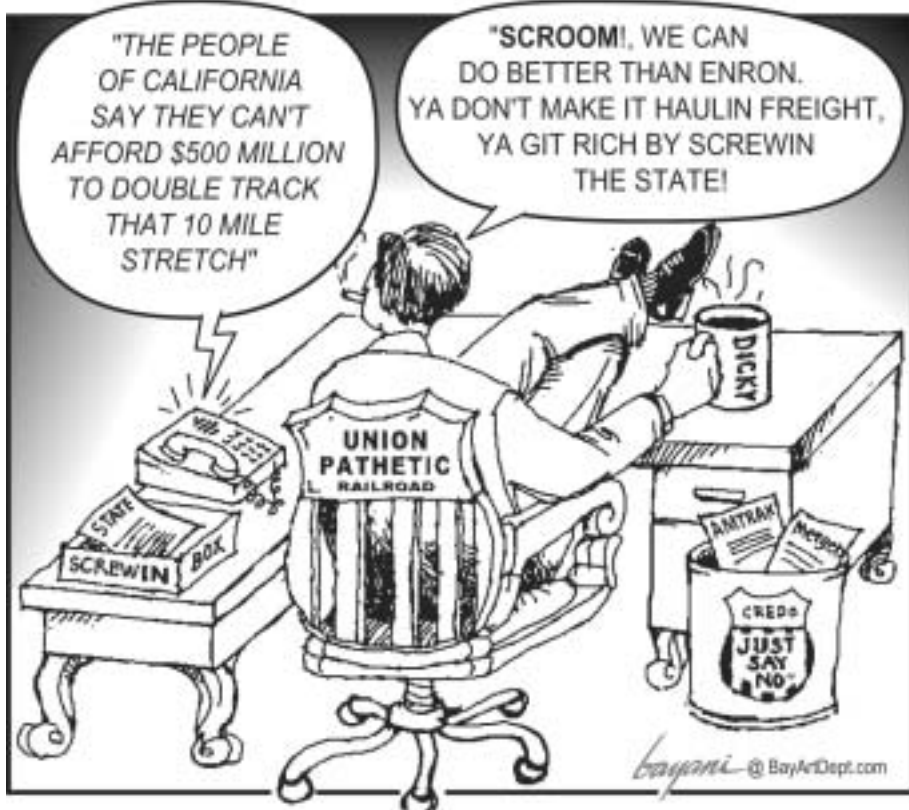
The Sacramento Station is a bit more of a challenge. The ongoing battle over the future of the property and Union Pacific's delays on interim improvements have left a situation wherein passengers may step off the train and wonder where the station is. The unwelcoming rear of the station unfortunately resembles the loading dock of an old warehouse. Cars may be parked in the bus stalls. Passengers don't know whether to use the tunnels or cross the tracks, and freight trains sometimes come rumbling through as passengers ignore loudspeaker instructions to use the tunnel. A herd of connecting buses, sometimes with incorrect destinations displayed, adds to the turmoil.

"It is one of the more confusing stations, and it will really help to have someone around to help people out," said Bob Koski, longtime TRAC member and new Assistant Scheduler recruited for Sacramento's Station Host operation. "I've seen people go down into the tunnel and come right back up on the other side with befuddled looks on their faces."

Assisting sister organizations like the Station Host Association of California is one of the ways TRAC helps the cause of improving passenger rail in the State. A recent email to Sacramento area TRAC members announcing the Station Host program brought a seed group of volunteers to the first training session. Doras and Ray have expressed great appreciation for TRAC's willingness to assist in recruiting Station Hosts as the program expands.

You don't have to be a TRAC member to become a Station Host, you just have to enjoy helping the traveling public. If you are interested in the Station Host program, pick up an application in your preferred station or email Ray Ahearn (ra555@sbcglobal.net) or Doras Briggs (rrdoras@aol.com).

DICKY'S WORLD



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Richard Tolmach, TRAC President
Alan C. Miller TRAC Executive Director

926 J Street, Suite 612,
Sacramento, CA 95814
Telephone: 916-557-1667
Fax: 916-448-1789
e-mail: trac@omsoft.com
www.calrailnews.com

The California Rail News encourages letters, comments, and reports on local issues. Please submit your material to California Rail News, 926 J Street, Suite 612, Sacramento, CA 95814. Sorry, we do not guarantee return of photos or articles submitted. Deadline for material to be included in the next issue of the California Rail News is September 15, 2002.

ADVERTISING RATES

Business card \$30, 2 col. x 6" \$100, half-page \$200, half-page color \$300, full-page color \$500, 15% reduction for run of 6 ads, 10% reduction for TRAC members.

Amtak's Gunn Displays A Disarming Honesty

Coast Observations

In two recent excerpts from public appearances, President David Gunn cleared the air by being candid about Amtrak finances and Acela's impact:

I've always been a bit of a critic of the industry. ... My criticism is that too much of our activities are not focussed on the basic economics of the business. We spend an awful lot of time... [on] appropriations and legislative strategies and the like and there's precious little time we spend talking about improving revenue-cost ratio of our properties. That's an absolutely critical measure, because we're always running around... talking about expansion.

For years, we've been dreaming of the day when rail passenger service and transit will expand—double, triple, quadruple, the amount of transit and the amount of investment that's out there. And when you have an industry, and I don't know the current cost recovery figure but for say for the sake of argument that it's fifty percent, doubling tripling the size of these properties, because when you double or triple the size of these properties you go into lower cost recovery areas. I can tell you that the trouble with Amtrak and a lot of transit properties have with the politicians is they view us as a bottomless pit. And that's one thing that I don't think we do a good job at.

If you look at our cost recovery, a whole lot of different things drive it. It's the type of equipment we buy, it's our ability to control our labor cost, our absenteeism and the like, and our ability to generate and to utilize fuel efficient vehicles, and to make good use of capital. And we don't do a very good job on this score. We have big problems in all of these areas, but we tend to focus on trying to find somebody who will fund us.

And I remember at SEPTA, where I was General Manager, they went on this endless hunt for predictable funding. They figured that was the answer to their problem. They eventually got some funding but it immediately got chewed up and the cost recovery dropped from where it used to be, like Toronto in the high sixties, and it dropped. I think it got down to forty percent.

So what I'm trying to say is we're not focussing on the right... issue. Let's just look at for a minute—equipment. You all know that we have a new set of electric trains running between Boston and New York, Acela. I never understood why they did that change. It would be like Coca-Cola taking a good brand name, Metroliner, and changing it to "brown liquid in a bottle"

But anyway, what we now have is Acela. And actually what a cela is is the room before the first floor. (Laughter) I don't know why they did that. And anyway we have these new trains and they're really nice and they go like hell, up to 150 miles per hour. I rode one, I rode the head end in the 150 mile an hour territory up to Boston, and all of a sudden we see a headlight.

You know I didn't want to say anything, but I was thinking this could be a real problem and a short career... cause trains close really fast at 150 miles per hour, but in this case the train was stopped and we slowed down, and we went through a high speed turnout, and I pretended that I wasn't nervous at all.

Let me ask you a question. Between New York and Washington we can run Acelas or we can run the AEM-7, the Mighty Mite locomotive, which is an off-the-shelf locomotive from Europe. It's just a garden variety locomotive that we bought, and Amfleet cars, and we can run the same schedule as we can with Acela. Now I want

to ask you something. If I have a train of passengers in an AEM-7 and Amfleet coaches in good condition, I realize there aren't very many of them left but if they were fixed up, and if you got an Acela, which train has the better profit margin? This is a trick question.

It's the Amfleet! I mean we went and spent a bundle of capital, we sold debt, we put the debt on our balance sheet. We're up to 3.7 billion dollars of indebtedness. Last year alone we added \$700 million dollars of debt to our balance sheet. How do you pay for that? I don't know. And we put a train into service, which is good, it's a very nice train from a passenger's point of view, [but it] made our economic situation worse.

The only thing you can say is north of New York, we cut the running time from four and a half hours to about three hours and forty five minutes. That was the benefit. Now, we needed new equipment I guess, but what did we do? We went out and spec'ed equipment that is one of a kind. There'll never be another one bought, I think. At least there'll never be another bought anytime soon, I can tell you. They're one of a kind, they're very expensive to run.

I mean, you look at that train, it is five revenue cars, one cafe car, and two locomotives. There's enough power on that train to run a ten car train and make the schedule. But I mean it is overpowered. There's absolutely no sense to the amount of power we are consuming to the benefit we are getting on that train. So, what we have done to ourselves is that we have made our economic situation worse. Now, the only thing you can say is that now that we own them, we've gotta run them—it's better than not running them.

What I'm saying is in this industry, you always want to look at the net income impact on the bottom line. Why did this happen with the Acela? It wasn't just because Amtrak didn't push the numbers. But what happened is it got totally screwed up when the politicians got into it and the Buy America and the FRA rulemakers got into it, and we ended up with a train that had to be custom built and is much more expensive than a train that we bought off the shelf.

The point in all of this is I'm not sure we did ourselves any favors with what we've done because if Amtrak was viewed as a bottomless pit before and we just did something that cost us a lot of money, we've got the debt on our balance sheet, and we didn't improve our bottom line.

On the MacNeil/Lehrer report, he managed to set things straight about long haul subsidies versus the Northeast corridor:

JIM LEHRER: When you look at the long-range... I mean what you call intercity passenger service, particularly the transcontinental, I read something today that they only haul 18 percent of your passengers, but account for 75 percent of your loss?

DAVID GUNN: No. You've got to be very careful. There's a lot of mythology about Amtrak's economics. Everything loses money. In other words, people will say it's the long-distance trains, and if you got rid of them, the corridor would be a profitable company. Not so. The passenger movement or transportation market in the United States is thoroughly subsidized, whether it's highway airlines or rail. And what's happened, like the basic structure of Amtrak is the Northeast Corridor covers most of its operating costs, the costs of the train crews and maintenance of the cars and so forth, but it does not cover its capital expenses. And we have an enormous deficit in that area.

THE SIGNS ON THE WINDOWS of San Joaquins and Capitols promoting cafe service may just be window dressing. Anyone who thinks new San Joaquin menus featuring Salisbury Steak and Macaroni and Cheese will save dining service, order up pronto. Informed sources say the decision already was made to drop the second cafe job and adopt a simplified menu. Given the \$1 million annual cost of that job, change is long overdue. A chronic absence of clear thinking has hobbled the food service for years. A recent furinstance: A RIDER IN LINE AT THE CAFE counter saw a Caltrans badge-wearer placing the signs, and asked what the purpose was. "To get people to visit the Cafe Car." Rider: "But this IS the Cafe Car." Caltrans: "Well, we don't know what order the cars are going to be in, any given day." Rider: "So you're telling me that when you change the cars around, you change the windows around?" Caltrans badge stomps off to resounding laughter... THE CHANGE THAT MAKES SENSE is to make some rational use of the non-revenue space in the Capitols and San Joaquins, which is upwards of 25 percent of the train, an even higher ratio than Acela. Caltrans has always claimed that there is no room for first class seats on the San Joaquins and Capitols. That room can be found in the 2/3 of the Cafe Car that is not needed for the food line or the server... AS THE GERMANS HAVE DISCOVERED, first class seating with free beverages, laptop hookups and meal service at the seat is a big seller and commands a great price. It's time to replace irrational non-revenue furniture in the Cafe Cars and start producing fares in the vast empty space... BART IS SHARPENING ITS PENCILS to penalize Caltrain riders to SFO with a pair of surcharges. First, a \$1.50 SFO premium, then a surcharge on top of regular prices for all new San Mateo stations. Nobody is saying how much the total is for Millbrae-SFO, but insider say it's the highest California transit fare per mile. The current SFO shuttle is FREE, guys... CAPITOL CORRIDOR PLANS to redesign its timetables. Current complaints include: "Difficulty using the schedule to plan trips from one point to another; Confusion identifying train vs. motorcoach segments... Distraction by the number of colors, shapes, lines and type treatments; Difficulty in understanding connecting motorcoach schedules; Difficulty [with] symbols throughout, including use of vertical lines to indicate "skipped" stations; Connections to other transit systems are confusing; Footnoted items are not noticed by users." It looks like passengers aren't buying the Caltrans marketing dogma that the current format is the best ever... UNION PACIFIC NEGATIVITY toward Amtrak has erupted again in a go-to-hell letter in response to a state offer of funding for a track capacity study of extension of one San Joaquin to L.A. Perhaps it's time for California to adopt a policy of only investing public funds in railroads that aren't involved in lobbying to kill Amtrak... CHECK OUT OUR REBUILT WEB SITE AT www.calrailnews.com and while you're there tell Congress to retain funding for Amtrak, especially long-haul trains serving California. E-mail Congress directly with a single click at: www.calrailnews.com

How Japan's Hankyu Railway Became a Retail Powerhouse

Japan's most competitive corridor has 4 services, but is dominated by a company that uses retail sales, land development, cultural events, and its geographic advantages on top of good service to outrun the Shinkansen and produce a profit.

by Leroy W. Demery, Jr.

It started as the train to nowhere; the little railroad that couldn't; a profitless Toonerville that shouldn't have been built. And so forth. Then it prospered, guided by the energetic, innovative leadership of a remarkable transport manager. No, not an excerpt from recent U.S. light rail history, but the origin of the Hankyu Electric Railway, one of Japan's most prosperous business enterprises.

Electric traction was introduced to Japan at an 1890 exposition in Tokyo's Ueno Park. Thereafter, competing interests scrambled to secure authority to build urban, suburban and intercity electric railways. Promoters hoped to follow the example of New England traction companies and build alongside local roads.

However, the first Japanese company to attempt this was forced to pay the cost of road widening. It soon decided to purchase land, as close to the road as practical, and build on its own right-of-way. This pattern was well established by 1905. Unlike their American counterparts, early Japanese electric railway companies could not build as quickly and as cheaply as possible. Instead, they had to invest substantial sums for lines which, as things turned out, could be upgraded into full-scale rapid transit systems.

A group of Osaka investors organized the Mino-o-Arima Electric Railway in 1907. Osaka was then a very dense, working-class commercial center, second-largest among Japanese cities with more than one million people. The company planned to build north and west from Osaka station to several small towns and recreation destinations. These included Mino-o, at the foot of a mountain range noted for hiking trails, almost directly north of Osaka. To the northeast, the hot springs of Takarazuka had been known for eleven centuries. Those at Arima, on the northern slope of the Rokko



mountains, were favored by Emperors and Buddhist clergy, and were mentioned in many historic and literary works.

The company built from a terminal at Umeda, just north of Osaka station, north to the Yodo riverbank, with about 0.6 mile of street track. It built a bridge to Juso, then continued northeast to Takarazuka, 14 miles from Umeda. The outer portion paralleled a government railway, today's Fukuchiyama Line. A 2.5-mile branch extended from Ishibashi to Mino-o.

The Mino-o and Takarazuka lines opened on March 10, 1910, and the company soon discovered what one of its founders anticipated. Recreational traffic, even from a large industrial city like Osaka, was not sufficient to support an electric railway. Not only that, but the company's longer line fell six miles short of its intended destination. Takarazuka was then little more than a wide spot in the road on the way to Arima, but the company could not afford to build up into the Rokko foothills. Between terminals, the railway was lined by not much more than open fields. The obvious solution

occurred to Ichizo Kobayashi (1873-1957) even before the company opened service: develop subsidiary enterprises that would also bring traffic to the railway.

Kobayashi was born in Yamanashi Prefecture, west of Tokyo. He attended today's Keio University, and began his business career with Mitsui Bank in 1893. Early on, he realized that the Mino-o-Arima company would need more than recreational traffic, for he began to circulate flyers inviting Osaka residents to move "out into the country" along the line prior to opening day. In Takarazuka, he approached local business owners and proposed an early version of "joint development." They declined. So, Kobayashi purchased land and established the Takarazuka New Spa Resort in 1911. This eventually became the Takarazuka Family Land amusement park, regrettably closed earlier this year owing to declining attendance.

Kobayashi then expanded his efforts at promoting large-scale residential development along the railway. His real-estate subsidiary sold houses at cost. To build confidence among prospective customers, Kobayashi directed company employees to buy houses in the new developments. In time, the company developed a monthly installment plan, with a typical Kobayashi twist: the company collected payments at its headquarters at Umeda terminal. This location was, of course, very convenient for homeowners who commuted to central Osaka. It was also convenient for the company, saving it the expense of maintaining branch offices. Development of new residential suburbs by railway enterprises became a common pattern in Japan, and contributed greatly to the growth of the country's new urban middle class after World War I.

Osaka's nearest urban neighbors include the bustling port city of Kobe and the ancient Imperial capital of Kyoto. Rail lines to Kobe and Kyoto were opened in 1874 and 1876, followed by electric railways in 1905 and 1910. Undeterred, Kobayashi's company changed its name to Hanshin Express Electric Railway in 1918. "Hanshin" is an abbreviation meaning "Osaka-Kobe," but this was firmly associated with the existing Osaka-Kobe line. So, Kobayashi's enterprise became known as "Hankyu," which is a contraction of "Hanshin Express." Some would say that this embodies the spirit of competition Osaka-style: "They're 'Osaka-Kobe,' but we're 'Osaka-Kobe Express!'" Kobayashi who had managed the company since 1913, became company president in 1927 and chairman in 1934.

Three half-hourly Hankyu limited expresses depart Osaka Umeda in formation on a recent Sunday afternoon. They run parallel nonstop on a six-track bridge across the Yodo River, then proceed to destinations of Kobe, Takarazuka, and Kyoto. The hub produces strong interchange traffic and massive crowds at Hankyu's main store at the head of the station. Photo: R. Tolmach

Hankyu opened a new line from Awaji to Kobe in 1920. Meanwhile, an affiliated company opened a line between Awaji and Kyoto between 1921 and 1928. A short underground extension reached central Kyoto in 1931. These new lines were built across empty land, soon to be occupied by Hankyu-sponsored subdivisions. By 1926, the trunk line between Umeda terminal and Awaji was elevated, with a separate pair of tracks for the Takarazuka and Kobe lines. A third pair of tracks was added for Kyoto trains in 1959. Simultaneous dispatch of express trains destined for Kobe, Kyoto and Takarazuka from Hankyu-Umeda terminal ranks among the more memorable sights in Osaka today.



Builder, innovator and huckster, Kobayashi embodied P. T. Barnum, Walt Disney and Henry E. Huntington, founder of Southern California's fabled Pacific Electric Railway. Kobayashi visited the American West Coast to study electric railway practices, where he probably met Huntington. (The late Gordon J. Thompson, who was the leading American expert on Japanese transportation history, wrote that he was not able to find documentation but believed that the two did meet.) Thompson chronicled the marvels of Japanese railways in a 1980 self-published journal.

An enduring legacy of Kobayashi's early promotional efforts began as the Takarazuka Girls' Theater. The Mitsukoshi department-

store chain sponsored a boys' band, inspiring Kobayashi to stage all-female musical performances. These he billed as "strictly wholesome entertainment suitable for women and children from good families." The idea was to attract visitors to Takarazuka — who would, of course, travel there and back aboard Hankyu trains. In time, the name "Takarazuka" became synonymous with the light opera performances staged there. These capitalized on the popularity of modern Western music, adding a uniquely Japanese twist: in contrast to the all-male casts in the traditional Kabuki and Noh theaters, the new musical spectacles had all-female casts — and proved highly popular with young women. Once regarded as a shocking new phenomenon that might disrupt the social order, Takarazuka today is an integral part of Japanese popular culture. (Although extremely popular! among young women — audiences are typically 90 per cent female — Takarazuka, in common with Kabuki and Noh, attracts little interest from most Western audiences.)

A new 4,000-seat theater replaced the original Takarazuka auditorium at (a converted indoor swimming pool) in 1923. A second Takarazuka Theater, this one in Tokyo, opened in 1934. An offshoot of the Tokyo Takarazuka enterprise, Toho Co. Ltd., became one of Japan's major motion picture producers and distributors. Toho produced noted director Akira Kurosawa's first film, and actor Toshiro Mifune made his debut with Toho.

Meanwhile, back in Osaka, more than 100,000 people commuted to and from Osaka each workday aboard Hankyu trains by 1924. Each of them, Kobayashi realized, was a potential shopper. He leased space on the first floor of Umeda terminal to a confectioner, and established a company-managed restaurant on the second floor. The volume of business was so great that the company terminated the confectioner's lease and opened the Hankyu Market, which offered food, books and sundries. Business continued to grow, and Kobayashi sought advice from Chubei Ito, whose father was founder of today's Itochu and Marubeni trading companies. As recounted by Hidetoshi Kato, their conversation went something like this:

"Say, Chubei, you've been calling my store a peanut stand. What do you mean by that?"

"About the only thing anyone can buy easily is peanuts. Why don't you make your shop into a real department store?"

Kobayashi smiled and replied, "To tell the truth, that's just what I wanted to discuss with you."

A department store built by a railway at its main terminal was a new idea. Nothing like this had ever been attempted on such a scale. Kobayashi began building the first Hankyu Department Store at Umeda in 1929. When completed in 1932, it had eight floors and two basement levels. Commuters paused for shopping on their way to and from their offices. Suburban housewives soon discovered the convenience of riding Hankyu trains into the city, for shopping at what became known as the "Terminal Department Store." The new traffic benefited both the railway and its retail subsidiary.

Hankyu expanded its retailing activities, opening a Kobe store in 1936 and its first Tokyo store in 1953. Hankyu Department

Stores, Ltd. was established as an independent enterprise in 1947 but remains a core member of the Hankyu group. By the early 1980s, revenues exceeded \$1 billion per year and the flagship Osaka store reported the largest sales volume of any single department store in Japan.

During a voyage to Europe, Kobayashi developed a taste for an early example of "fusion" cuisine: beef curry and rice, at that time a "high-collar" (= "upper crust") dish. He hired the ship's cook for his restaurant, and sought to popularize "curry rice." The Hankyu restaurant's signature dish became so popular that Kobayashi contracted with farmers to raise cattle exclusively for Hankyu. In time, curry rice became as much of a Japanese staple as sushi.

Today, Hankyu's 91-mile rail network carries nearly two million passengers per day, and traffic approaches three million per day on workdays. More than 3,000 staff members operate nearly 104 million vehicle-miles per year. During the 2000 fiscal year, the railway division earned more than \$850 million in revenue and reported a net profit of nearly \$110 million. During the mid-1980s, Hankyu had the highest profit ratio among Japan's large independent railways. Among its many subsidiaries is the Hankyu Braves baseball team, whose Nishinomiya stadium is near a major station on the Kobe line.

Ichizo Kobayashi originated the idea of an integrated network of service enterprises with a railway as its hub. Other companies followed Hankyu's lead, giving rise to the the prosperous, profitable railway networks that serve Japan's large cities. Planners in other countries debate how to encourage land-use patterns that will induce greater use of public transport facilities,

how to coordinate housing and retail development with transit stations, and so forth. All of this, and much more, has been accomplished along Hankyu's lines over the past 90 years.

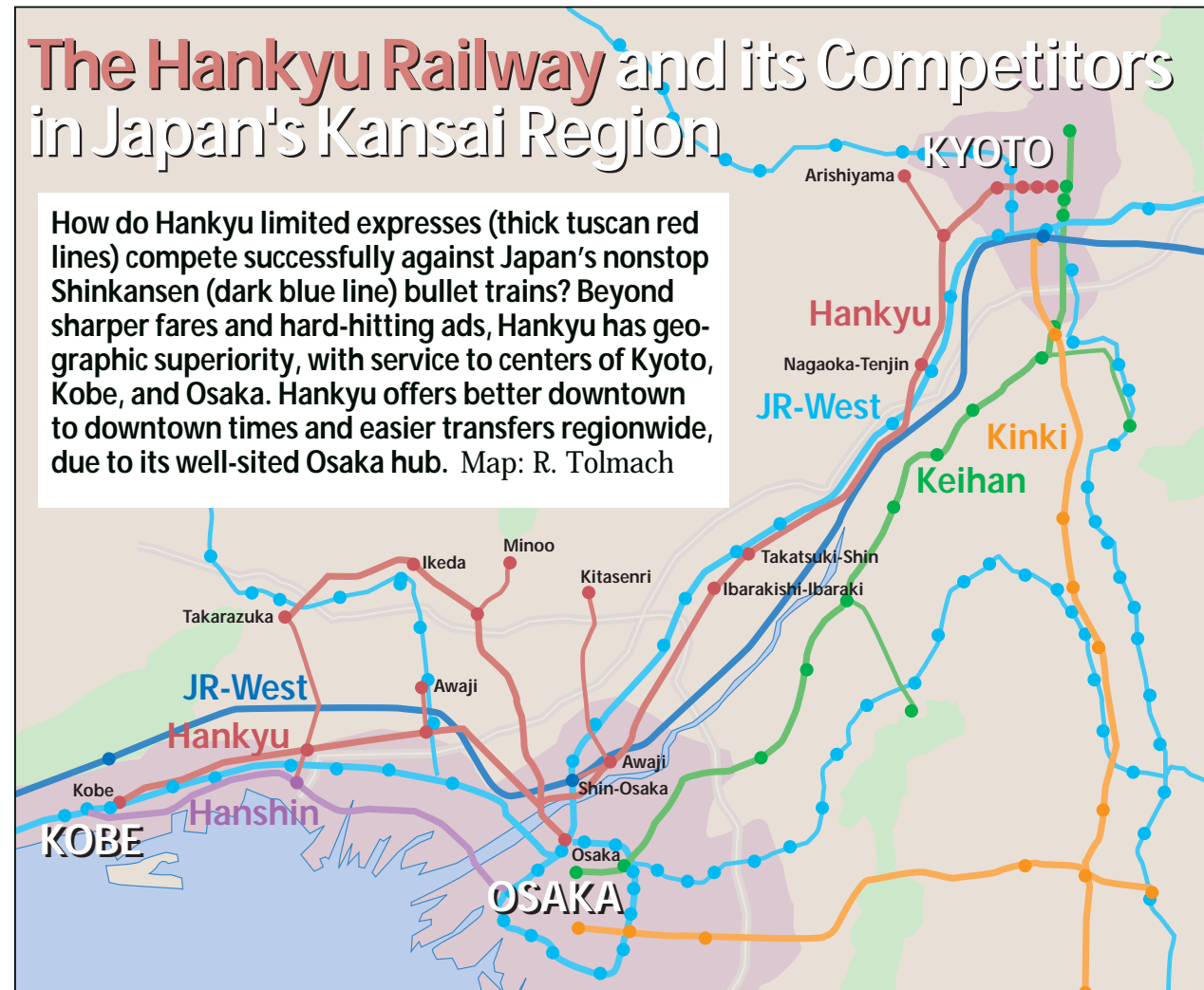
Ichizo Kobayashi once wanted to be a writer, and so it seems appropriate to conclude with a 1910 newspaper advertisement he wrote, presented in translation by Hidetoshi Kato:

Unfortunate Osaka citizens living in this smoke-darkened metropolis, its once sparkling waters gone as if in a dream of yore.... let each of you breathe at

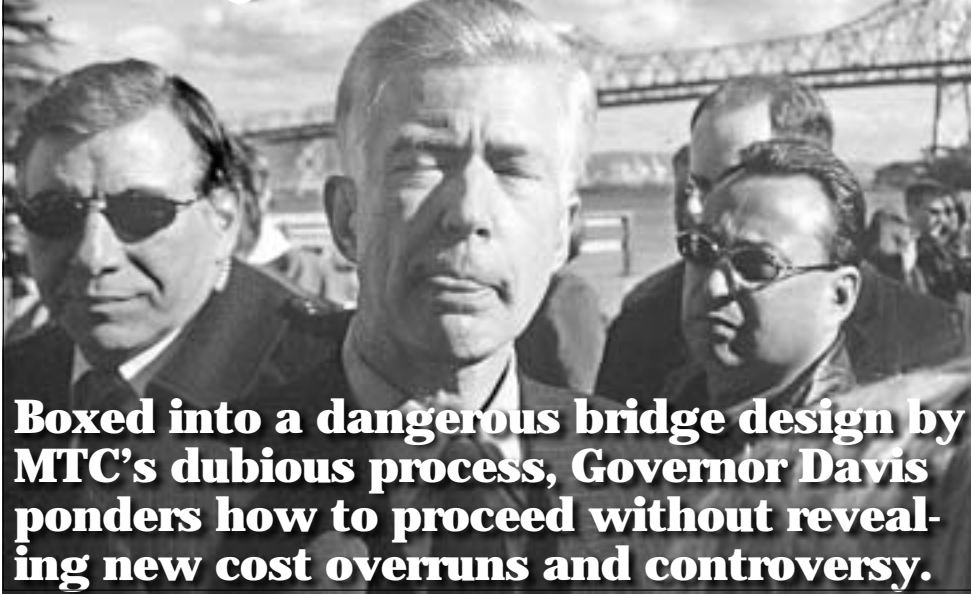
ease in your own home, your own castle. What we have always spoken of as "clothing, food and shelter" must be rearranged in its natural sequence to "shelter, food and clothing".... Coming into the city to work the day through, day upon day, batters the brain; you who would ease your tired body at home should awaken the following morn to Chanticleer's call, rejoice in the evening to the music of insects in the heath, savor fresh, hand-cultivated vegetables. You should demand the spacious garden of your desires that you might live amidst these pastoral pleasures.... if one were to propose to present this idyllic home to you, without hesitating you would decide in favor of living in the country. Just as you expected! This perfect new homesite, this idyllic new house, is right at hand. Read carefully the following: "Exemplary Suburban Life—Ikeda New Town."

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Gray's Dilemma



Boxed into a dangerous bridge design by MTC's dubious process, Governor Davis ponders how to proceed without revealing new cost overruns and controversy.

Guest Article by Robert Freehling

While our national passenger rail system pleads for \$200 million to survive, a single California bridge, the east span Bay Bridge replacement is poised to gobble \$3 billion. Most of the funding is from toll revenues originally earmarked for public transit. Rail is not in the project, in spite of several voter referenda that overwhelmingly urged rail be included. The project also precludes intercity or commuter trains on the bridge in the future. Ironically, because rail demands sturdier construction, the decision to exclude trains may have led to a less safe bridge design.

An analysis of huge cost overruns by the earthquake retrofit program on California's toll bridges was released August 1 by the State Auditor. Requested a year ago by state politicians worried about the budget-busting potential of the program, the audit found most of the extra cost is due to the planned replacement for the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge east span, and is likely to grow.

The project, however still is not all under contract, and lingering questions remain about the buildability of the structure. Last September the legislature brokered a deal with Governor Davis to give Caltrans an extra two billion dollars for the program, almost doubling the price tag. The audit report said that the cost overruns were directly due to the legislature, which essentially allowed Caltrans and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to spend as much as want. The audit also said that Caltrans historically underestimates costs, so the price for the bridges may go even higher.

Steve Heminger, MTC Executive Director recently commented to the *San Jose Mercury News*, "The issue that remains, that neither they nor we know, is what will be the final cost." And this will depend on the ballooning price of a small portion of the bridge design added by MTC.

In 1997, when Bay Area officials and designers saw the unattractive design proposed by Caltrans, they were not happy. Here was a beautiful urban landscape, a picturesque bay crossed by a renowned collection of graceful suspension bridges. And Caltrans was about to throw a concrete freeway into the middle of it. In response to protests, Governor Wilson agreed to allow MTC a voice in the design. Caltrans chimed in that they would not build a bridge over the will of the Bay Area. MTC decided to build the east span in two parts:

1. The skyway— Caltrans' concrete freeway would be 4/5 of the span length.
2. A smaller suspension span— 1/5 the length of the bridge, on the western end, as decoration for the unsightly skyway, and to

blend in with other bridges in the bay.

To give the suspension span a function, they said it was needed to cross over a shipping channel. But Caltrans' concrete bridge had already been designed for this; chief engineer Maroney insisted that the skyway without a suspension span was Caltrans' preferred option. In any case, the east span channel is rarely used, since large ships go under the west span of the bridge.

MTC created the Engineering and Design Advisory Panel (EDAP) as a "panel of experts" to evaluate new designs for the Bay Bridge. A public competition was announced, with only ten days notice, and with some members of the jury from companies entering the competition. Bridge designer T Y Lin competed with T Y Lin International, the company he used to own. Both firms were represented on EDAP.

MTC, responding to complaints, denied conflicts of interest. MTC rules only say a conflict of interest needs to be declared, and then it is no longer a conflict of interest. On the second day of the competition, members of EDAP who were both in the jury and from firms giving submittals were asked to raise their hands; a number of them did. For MTC, that closed the issue.

Within a day of this "show of hands", Caltrans' design and a number of others were rejected. Then the panel spent a year arguing about the remaining designs. These were from firms represented on the panel. The head of EDAP was Joseph Nicholetti, a "man of many hats" who chaired another group that helped Caltrans with the same bridge retrofits, the Seismic Advisory Board.

Mr. Nicholetti was also an employee of an engineering company called URS Greiner, that was interested in getting a contract for the bridge. Now renamed URS Corp., this firm is tied to politics in the Bay Area and beyond. Faced with charges of conflict of interest, one member of EDAP withdrew, which put chair Nicholetti in an awkward position. The design he was aligned with was a more classic, and better proven, cable-stayed bridge. But if EDAP chose it, it could be accused of unfairness.

After a year of discussion, they decided on the design that had less conflict, at least for the chair. The "single towered, asymmetrical, self-anchored suspension bridge" was declared by MTC to be the choice of their body of experts, by a vote of 12 to 6. The elected MTC board asked Nicholetti the reason for this long awaited choice; he replied that it was just a personal preference he couldn't defend in any way. Half the 36 EDAP members did not bother to vote on one of the most important bridge projects in their lifetime. Some complained that a small

clique had taken over the panel, and those without plans on the table were excluded. One EDAP member said he was embarrassed to be part of this process "at this time in history."

When the choice of the unusual self anchored suspension span was made, concerns were raised about its seismic reliability. Any compromise of the integrity of any part, including the road deck, could lead to catastrophic collapse. The US Army Corps of Engineers investigated the design, and found key analysis missing, errors in calculations, hazards hidden in the foundations, and a possible fault line directly under the main tower. Seismic experts also thought the computerized earthquake model used for testing the design was inadequate.

Contractors complain that as spec'ed, the self-anchored span is nearly impossible to build. Its fragile balance of forces requires special handling, and work will have to be stopped every four hours for inspections and recalibration of machinery. A temporary "falsework" bridge will be built to support construction of the road deck, and then dismantled. Then, a huge 500 foot tall crane will be custom built to lift the main tower into place, at a cost of about \$50 million. After this project it will have no further use.

No other asymmetrical bridge of this type has ever been built. Picking this bridge type violated Caltrans's policy of "not pushing the envelope" on major bridge projects, to protect the public from being the object of untried experiments. After all, the first purpose of the \$5 billion retrofit program was to limit seismic vulnerability, not add to it.

The selected self-anchored span design is fraught with problems that can likely only be fixed by throwing a lot more money at it, or scrapping the design. So far, Caltrans, MTC, the legislature and the Governor, terrified of appearing to stand in the way of public safety, are opting for "throwing-more-money-at-it."

The seismic retrofit program puts more money at stake than Global Crossing's "accounting misstatement," but has been inadequately scrutinized. On the Bay Bridge, a panel with multiple conflicts of interest was given power to choose the design and award millions of tax dollars to their employers. Caltrans and MTC blamed the public for expensive delays; claimed that inflation was not factored in, that construction costs went up faster than anticipated; and that the bike path was not originally included. Yet the audit, and other documents, show that inflation, controversy over rail, and the potential for added amenities, delays, a bike path, and even a suspension span were all known between 1996 and 1998.

The facts should be put in context. Other Caltrans projects have ballooned in cost: recently, Caltrans announced 25% inflation of statewide road projects in just three months, even though US construction prices (labor plus materials) only went up a fraction of a percent. As can be concluded by reading the State Auditor's report, California prices escalate mostly because the Governor and Legislature are willing to let them.

The self-anchored ornamental bridge was first foreseen to add \$70 million to the project; later this was raised to \$300 million. Today it is rapidly approaching a billion dollars. Only another toll increase, this time to \$3, or new taxes, could cover the cost. The tragedy is that the toll money dumped into 'seismic retrofits' was supposed to be reserved for public transit, not cars. It was to be part of the solution, not the problem.

The politically difficult answer to out-of-control project costs will only be known after the next contract goes out to bid, which is for the self-anchored span. Bids had been scheduled for August, but currently most observers expect the process will be delayed until safely after the November election, to limit Governor Davis's political exposure to any further budget meltdown.

Long Haul Trains Still Threatened by RR Lobbyists

by Alan C. Miller

TRAC Executive Director

The press has spoken: once again the feds bail Amtrak out at the last moment, first for a few weeks, now through the fiscal year (Sept. 30). Some are breathing a sigh of relief. I am not. I haven't felt so disheartened since we lost the *Pioneer*, the *Desert Wind*, the *National Limited*, the *Floridian*, the *Lone Star* and the *North Coast Hiawatha*.

We had several years relief from having to trot out the old argument: "All forms of travel are subsidized... blah, blah, blah." The 'other side' conveniently ignores airline and highway subsidy and trots out the highest subsidy of the worst-performing train in the country and shows how much taxpayers pay to subsidize their ticket. I had hoped we would not have to go through this 'preserve Amtrak' fight again, as if that should even be an issue!

There are some encouraging signs this time around. SB 1991 by Senator Ernest Hollings (D-So. Carolina) proposes major increases in rail funding and capital investment in future rail infrastructure including partnerships for high-speed rail. Senate subcommittees have recommended the full (\$1.2 Billion) funding Amtrak requested for FY03. Both the House and Senate have passed supplemental appropriations to fund Amtrak the needed \$205 million for the remainder of FY02 so the company doesn't run out of cash.

There are several legislative hurdles left, however, before Amtrak is fully funded for FY03, the largest one being the White House. Transportation Secretary Mineta has promised no one wants to see Amtrak shut down, yet the Executive Branch seems to have no clue about Amtrak's funding needs. They have offered Amtrak a mere \$520 million for FY03, which wouldn't even begin to fund the current system.

The media hasn't helped in this perception. Repeatedly the media reports Amtrak lost \$520 million this year, but is asking for \$1.2 billion for next year. This makes it appear the cost to run Amtrak jumped 130% in one year, which is hardly true. Rarely is it pointed out that the former figure is operating subsidy only, while the latter is operating subsidy plus capital needs. Even the ill-conceived and largely now-discounted congressional mandate that Amtrak be self-sufficient never asked for more than operational self-sufficiency. It was always assumed that the federal government would continue to fund Amtrak's capital needs. In essence the media is comparing oranges to apples plus oranges by leaving out this year's apples.

The White House seems to have an understanding of Amtrak's financing that doesn't go beyond reading the newspapers. It is offering this year's operating subsidy as the total subsidy for Amtrak for FY03, which actually starves Amtrak of capital. The ill-conceived agreements between Amtrak and the White House to mortgage Penn Station and increase Amtrak's debt largely contributed to this state-of-affairs.

David Gunn says he doesn't blame his predecessor for the current state of affairs at Amtrak, which only speaks to David Gunn's class as a person and his recognition that such statements would not serve to help Amtrak's future. I, however, do not need to be so kind. This is an era where a law was just passed by Congress which mandates jail time to heads of corporations who knowingly lie about the financial health of their corporation. Were this criteria applied to the former head of Amtrak ...well, I'll let you finish my train of thought.

If Amtrak's capital funding needs were similar in past years as is being asked for this year, how were these needs paid for? First of all, some of it must have been paid for through capital subsidy—but with the

Warrington administration's screwy accounting, it is difficult to say how much. Second, capital needs were largely deferred, leaving the system in a state of increased disrepair year after year, creating another de-facto debt by requiring increased capital spending for future years. Thirdly, the gap in capital funding was raised by borrowing, thus increasing Amtrak's debt to \$4 billion, again putting off the inevitable. If Warrington did one thing possibly right, he kept the entire system running until there was nothing left in his bag of financial duct-tape and superglue. He then jumped ship, and Amtrak found one of the few men who might be able to hold everything together and convince Congress that additional monies will be used responsibly. Mr. Gunn has pulled this off solely by the respect he has gained through his reputation and his straight talk.

Mr. Gunn is asking for the full \$1.2 billion promising that in the future Amtrak's accounting will be fully accessible to the public and Congress and no more games will be played to try to meet some unattainable mandate. Congress has obviously abandoned its former mandate that Amtrak be operationally self-sufficient and may place its faith in Gunn's abilities to turn rail transit systems around. Will the White House go along with this or continue to play the ridiculous game of pretending Amtrak can get by starving it of capital and increasing its debt?

Unfortunately, some forces exist at Amtrak which still don't seem to understand the threat. A very ill-conceived memo from Amtrak corporate communications dated July 9 only repeats the February 1 press-conference statement by Warrington which laid long-distance trains out as scape-goats and implies that only long-distance trains require operating subsidies. Despite the fact that Warrington later distanced himself from the remarks, they were repeated over and over in the press for months and used by anti-Amtrak forces as ammunition. The July 9 memo breaks down the \$1.2 billion request as follows:

- \$840 million in basic and mandatory capital investments (those needed to maintain current levels of safety, reliability and regulatory compliance)
- \$200 million to support the operations of the long-distance trains (after internal cross-subsidies)
- \$160 million for excess RRTA, a railroad retirement obligation.

Does anyone notice anything missing? Yes, this adds up to \$1.2 billion and there is no category for operating monies for any trains not categorized as 'long-distance'. I requested clarification from Liz O'Donoghue of Amtrak West. She assures me that "the operating support [for medium and short-distance trains] is there, just not called out." She also confirms that the wording is the same as that from Warrington's February 1 press conference.

While I understand the need to keep the amount requested consistent, apparently no one informed the source of this memo that David Gunn isn't willing to lay out the long-distance trains as sacrificial lambs the way Warrington was. This July 9 memo is extremely disturbing for three reasons. First, Warrington himself disavowed blaming long-distance trains for all the operating losses. Secondly, how was this memo released without David Gunn approving it? I have followed Gunn's speeches, statements and letters to employees and Gunn would never approve such wording. Thirdly, some personnel at Amtrak don't seem to get the fundamental reason that the White House continues to offer only shutdown-level subsidies to Amtrak. The White House knows Amtrak and most corridors will survive; what this is really about is:

This is an attack on long distance trains.

If you doubt this I refer you to an article by Bob Withers of the *Herald-Dispatch* in West Virginia dated June 27, 2002. In regard to earlier talks between the Mineta and Amtrak over the interim funding, the article states: "A key sticking point in the debate has been what to do about Amtrak's long-distance trains, including the Chicago-Washington *Cardinal*."

"*Mineta met with new Amtrak President/ CEO David L. Gunn about 10 days ago and offered the carrier a \$100 million bridge loan to cover operations through the end of August, said Karina Van Veen, an Amtrak spokeswoman in Washington, D.C.*

But Gunn, who is committed to saving the national Amtrak system in its entirety, turned him down because the deal would have required Amtrak to immediately begin dismantling its long-distance network and concentrate services in corridors only.

*Gene Poon, a travel agent with Sheehan's Travel in Rohnert Park, Calif., whose specialty is Amtrak, told The Herald-Dispatch that he was told the Cardinal was the No. 2 train on the cut list, second only to the Los Angeles-Orlando *Sunset Limited*. 'They would probably be the first to go,' Poon said.*

Next, Mineta met with the Amtrak Board of Directors Monday to make the same offer over Gunn's head. The board also turned him down. Gunn has made his position clear since assuming office May 15 that Amtrak's national system should be preserved, not dismembered ..."

The unlikely re-release of Warrington's February 1 comments hangs long-distance service out to dry with the bullet point: "\$200 million to support the operations of the long-distance trains." The obvious danger of this is it gives a line-item amount that the anti-long-distance-train forces can point to and say, "Let's give Amtrak just \$1.0 Billion and make them drop those pesky land cruisers and save taxpayers \$200 million." Those responsible for releasing this memo handed the Bush administration a grenade to toss back at Amtrak during funding negotiations. Are there forces within Amtrak itself that wish to dismantle these trains?

Why is the Bush Administration gunning for our long-haul trains? Well...

- Vice President Dick Cheney served on the UP Board of Directors until recently.
- UP laid a half mile of temporary track to the 2000 GOP convention site in Philadelphia to accommodate UP business cars. Union Pacific contributed more than three-quarters of a million dollars to Republican campaigns in the last election cycle.
- Union Pacific Railroad was honored recently by the Newcomen Society of the United States at the Petroleum Club in Houston. Dick Davidson, chairman and CEO of Union Pacific Corporation, was the guest of honor. Former President George Bush introduced Davidson.
- The recent anti-Amtrak *New York Times* article "Amtrak Must Die" spent multiple paragraphs attacking just one train: the *Sunset*. The author actually argues "Cutting the *Sunset Limited* might actually result in fewer trucks on the roads because it would be easier to ship freight by rail if Amtrak weren't given priority on the Union Pacific's tracks."

(Writers note: If you want a guaranteed laugh, tell *Sunset* passengers Amtrak has priority on the *Sunset Route*.)

- Secretary Mineta said recently: "[Amtrak] has embraced numerous business plans—including some that have set it in competition with the freight railroads."

While none of the above is absolute proof of anything, readers can draw your own conclusions about relations between the nation's largest railroad and the nation's highest office.

DOES DIRIDON DISRESPECT VALLEY CITIES?

by Alan C. Miller
TRAC Executive Director

California's High Speed Rail Authority (HSRA) apparently will not reconsider its destructive decision to study only existing rail routes in the Central Valley, going right through each city, despite clear evidence it is a costly and unpopular plan. The Authority's Mehdi Morshed wrote TRAC on June 14, 2002 to say that all "non-railway corridors through the Central Valley have been eliminated from consideration at this time...These screening decisions are all supported and based on sound analysis."

Are they? And, is premature elimination of feasible and practical routes before a complete fiscal and environmental analysis in the best interests of the people of California? TRAC Vice President Dan McNamara warned HSRA at its May 15 Oakland meeting that "if you eliminate options now it is way too premature and it does open you up to litigation at the end of this."

Apparently, HSRA would rather fight than switch. HSRA Chair Rod Diridon told the San Joaquin Rail Committee (SJRC) at its July 12 meeting that the other options had been eliminated due to "an outcry from the communities and you." Diridon's claim that HSRA responds to community outcries may now cause one.

Larry Miller, an SJRC member who represents Fresno County said in an August letter to Valley newspapers that, "According to

HSRA these trains will travel at speeds of up to 220 mph. This means there is a roughly even chance that, on average, there will be something like a train every 10 minutes—night and day—barreling non-stop through Selma and Kingsburg at astronomically high speeds and with a sound pressure level that could be downright frightening."

"The specific number they put on this sound is 95 decibels—and above," said Miller. He compared it to the "end of an airport runway. If that noise level is not enough to make your head ache, it is certainly enough to stop all conversation. Every day. Every night. Day in. Day out. Inescapably – for all of the foreseeable future."

HSRA has met with politicians but has not gone out of its way to explain the project or its noise impacts to the Valley public, a factor which may have permanently harmed the project's credibility. Miller's letter further states, "Members of the HSRA insist that Valley residents were already informed of this possibility and have already had their opportunity to be heard on the subject, during what they call the 'scoping' process. Basically this means they sent out a few notices to a few local officials and told them their constituents were free to comment."

TRAC's own proposal on how to handle the noise problem is to avoid cities with the fast line. TRAC Executive Director Alan C. Miller testified at the San Jose HSRA Board Meeting on July 17 comparing HSRA's plan to TRAC's plan: "Our plan calls for the trains

that do not stop—only the trains that do not stop—to bypass the towns. How many trains is this? The [June 2000 Final Business Plan] on page 17 and 59 shows 170 trains a day. 130 run down the south end of the Valley. 80 of the trains do not even stop in Fresno. 104 of the trains do not make any other stops in the Valley. So we are taking 104 trains out of every town that they do not stop in in the Valley, plus we are taking every train out of all the Valley towns down Highway 99 that your plan proposes to blast through."

Dan Leavitt, a civil engineer with HSRA, was asked at a meeting at the Sierra Club in Berkeley how the authority would address the environmental impacts of dividing each Valley town with a surface 220 mph line. He suggested that trenching or tunneling was a viable option. However, when asked by Caltrans Rail Division Chief Warren Weber whether HSRA would underground the line, both Leavitt and Morshed denied that was ever their intent. It appears that HSRA answer changes for each new audience.

The only remaining option to mitigate noise would be to slow trains to 120 mph or less for every population cluster along the increasingly populated corridor. However, longer travel times would eliminate the very travel market that has justified the project.

Mr. Diridon apparently has a different strategy in mind on how to deal with the noise problem: deny it exists. In response to a question at the SJRC meeting, he stated: "Electric trains have virtually no noise."

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the November 5 election, a high speed rail session featuring the latest news from Europe, and a broad symposium on Amtrak's future, and the impact of budget problems on California's operating and capital improvement programs. Also, on Sunday, we will host a tour of the downtown section of Regional Transit's new South Line.

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