

Vice-Presidents:

Sir John Betjeman, C.B.E.

Lord Kinross

Lord Popplewell, C.B.E., J.P.

John Arlott, Esq., O.B.

The Very Rev. J. H. S. Wild, M.A., Dean of Durham

Torquil Nicholson Esq., B.Sc., A.M.I.E.E.

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

No. 86

MARCH 1971CAMBRIAN COAST SURVEY

✓X We are pleased to announce that this Society has submitted to the Ministry of Transport Industries a memorandum on the first report of the Special Unit for the Study of Unremunerative Rail Services, published in January of last year. This report was a social cost/benefit analysis of the Cambrian Coast line (Machynlleth-Pwllheli). Observations on the report have already been submitted to the Minister by the National Council on Inland Council, of which this Society is a corporate founder member. The purpose of our memorandum, therefore, is to submit additional comment in the light of the dialogue which has taken place between the Minister and the Council.

As the editor of this progress report had no hand whatsoever in the production of the memorandum, he cannot be accused of bias if he states that, in his opinion, it is one of our finest publications.

The memorandum consists of seven foolscap pages. Among the points which it makes are the following:-

"... if a limited number of additional passing loops were inserted and additional DMUs provided, it would appear feasible to run the present service, augmented by an hourly 'principal town' service between Aberystwyth, Machynlleth and Pwllheli. No consideration at all was given, either, to the possibility of re-opening the link line between Bangor and Afonwen".

"It is noted that the cost of a house to house survey would have been greater than the type of survey carried out, but the benefits of (the former) are that persons who either never, or very rarely, travel by rail would be interviewed. The reasons for their reluctance to travel by this means could have been elucidated and developments of services and facilities could have been planned in accordance with these."

"The freight survey, at very little extra cost, could have been circulated to all industries in the area, with the same aim in view as with non-users of the passenger services."

"Whilst it is not disputed that car ownership in the area is above the United Kingdom average, it should not be assumed that car owners are 'lost to rail transport' permanently. If services were improved sufficiently, much traffic could be won back from the roads."

"The reasons why road transport is superior to rail for freight traffic in this area are not

outlined. This appears to be an unsupported claim."

"... the effect, in terms of loss of contributory revenue, on the Aberystwyth to Shrewsbury and Wolverhampton to Chester lines should have been included in the analysis..."

"The survey notes that fares paid by passengers are of relatively slight importance in any analysis of the fares by bus and rail are comparable. This takes no account of the fact that bus companies reduce fares when running parallel to rail... no mention is made of season ticket facilities, which are available by rail but not by Crosville buses anywhere in Wales. Quarterly season tickets are some 30% cheaper than bus fares".

"Road delivery is but once daily in large towns and but once weekly in villages. It fails completely in bad weather and during periods of staff shortage."

"If a through train from Pwllheli to Euston were restored, the new timings over the electrified section (Wolverhampton to London) would enable the train to compete very favourably indeed with the private car in terms of speed and comfort."

On the subject of journeys to and from work, the memorandum states:

"... there is apparent lack of interest on the part of British Rail to find out why the service is so poorly patronised for this purpose." On holiday journeys, it claims that - "Too much emphasis should not be placed on 'the importance of Barmouth' ... both Pwllheli and Tywyn contributed considerably to the total number of holiday-makers travelling by rail." And on the use of the line by schoolchildren, it is pointed out that "No mention is made in the survey of the costs to the bus-undertaking of investing in new vehicles for replacement school bus service... buses are usually run on special services which ordinary passengers may not use. The present rail services may, however, be used by any fare paying passengers."

"It is submitted that the fact that approximately 75% (or more) of all tourists ... come by private road vehicle has led to a serious deterioration in amenity value in the scenery of Wales and also that this is perhaps the major 'unquantifiable cost' of closing the line."

"It seems most unlikely that any long term increase in bus traffic would arise in the area if this line were closed. In any case, patronage of bus services in rural areas is declining generally at a faster rate than rail services because of their inherent disadvantages."

✕ Whilst agreeing that "the concept of a cost/benefit study of a social asset, such as a railway line, is a good one", the memorandum states that "to be of any use, it has to consider a wide cross-section of alternative future strategies". It is contended that "the survey ... has not in fact done this." The "methodological inadequacies of the report", are brilliantly commented upon in the final part which concentrates upon three problems. Detailed analysis of these, it is stated, was omitted from the report. The problems are:-

- (1) measurement of the elasticity of demand for passenger traffic in various travel markets;
- (2) allocation of contributory revenue;
- (3) connectivity and relationship of the utility of the Cambrian Coast system to the utility of British Railways as a whole. ✕

At the end of the memorandum is a useful bibliography, of international coverage, for those who wish to delve further into general questions raised by the report. (see also pages 6 and 12).

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The eighteenth annual general meeting of the Railway Invigoration Society will be held at 2.30 p.m. on Saturday, 24th April, 1971, in Room 46, Dr. Johnson House, Colmore Circus, Birmingham. 4.

"THE COMMENDABLE RAILWAY INVIGORATION SOCIETY"

"Skinflint's city diary" in the Spectator of 23rd January, p. 137, contains a section headed "Railway Invigoration." This concerns "the ticket strategy of British Railways" and mentions as an example that there is a second-class, but no first-class, cheap day return fare from London to Sheffield. The section concludes: "Perhaps the commendable Railway Invigoration Society (for the retention and modernisation of railway services) will give them some advice."

We are grateful to "Skinflint" for bringing this matter to the attention of this Society and assure him that we are certainly looking into it. Our thanks are also due to him for his favourable mention of our efforts.

RETURN OF A CORPORATE MEMBER

We welcome the return to corporate membership of the Society of the East Suffolk Travellers' Association, which was revived last year and was a corporate member during its previous existence (see progress report no. 82 (March, 1970), p. 6.)

IN PARLIAMENT

This is a new feature, started at the suggestion of our Press and Publicity Officer (Mr. R. V. Banks). It will consist mainly of extracts from the "House of Commons official report: parliamentary debates (Hansard)", although, occasionally, extracts from the corresponding publication for the House of Lords will also be included.

✓ X (N.B. Among the reorganisation of certain ministries which took place last October, three - those of Transport, Housing and Local Government, and Public Building and Works - were merged to form the Department of the Environment, with the Rt. Hon. Peter Walker, MBE, MP, as Secretary of State, at its head. The Minister of Transport Industries is the former Minister of Transport, the Rt. Hon. John Peyton, MP. Transport planning, however, is now the responsibility of the new Minister for Local Government and Development, Mr. Graham Page, MBE, MP. Among the four joint parliamentary under-secretaries of state of the new Department Mr. Eldon Griffiths, MP, assists Mr. Peyton, while Mr. Page is generally assisted by The Rev. Lord Sandford, DSC, and Mr. Michael Heseltine, MP.) X

Written answers (Abbreviation : SSE = Secretary of State for the Environment)

1970

6th November Disused railway tracks Mr. Barry Jones (Flintshire, East) asked the Secretary of State for Wales if he is aware that in Wales there are many miles of disused railway tracks; if he will consider the Countryside Commission's proposal that these disused tracks could be used for such purposes as car and caravan parks, and camping sites; if he will consider taking steps to encourage local authorities to initiate such projects in the public interest; and if he will make a statement. Mr. Peter Thomas Under existing procedures such land is normally offered to local authorities in whose areas it is situated and it is for them to decide whether to acquire the land for some public use. My rt. hon. Friend, the SSE, and I are at present considering suggestions made in the Countryside Commission's report for changing the procedures.

11th November Public telephones on passenger trains Mr. Gilbert (Dudley) asked the SSE if he will give a general direction to British Railways to introduce public telephone connections on to passenger trains operating in the inter-city services. Mr. Eldon Griffiths No.

Manchester-Oldham-Rochdale passenger service Mr. Barnett (Heywood and Royton) asked the SSE if he will make a statement on his policy in view of the application by British Railways to close the Manchester-Oldham-Rochdale passenger rail service. Mr. Peyton I am reviewing my policy on unremunerative rail passenger services. Meanwhile, each closure proposal will be considered individually on its merits.

British Railways (fares structure) Mr. Gregor Mackenzie (Rutherglen) asked the SSE if, in the public interest, he will give a general direction to British Railways to revise the fare structure. Mr. Eldon Griffiths No.

London Underground (extension) Mr. Spearing (Acton) asked the SSE if he has yet received any application from the Greater London Council for contributions of capital funds for the proposed Fleet Line and if he will make a statement. Mr. Thomas Cox (Wandsworth, Central) asked the SSE what proposals he has now received for capital expenditure on the London Underground. Mr. Selwyn Gummer (Lewisham, West) asked the SSE what requests for capital expenditure on the future underground lines in London had been received from the Greater London Council. Mr. Moyle (Lewisham, North) asked the SSE whether he has now received a proposal from the Greater London Council for the extension of the Fleet line into southeast London; and whether he will make a statement. Mr. Michael Heseltine The Government has been asked to pay capital grants towards the cost of extending the Piccadilly line to Heathrow and of the Fleet line. The decision on the Heathrow link was published on 6th November. I am in consultation with the GLC about the Fleet line.

13th November Romford-Upminster push-pull railway line Mr. Loveridge (Hornchurch) asked the SSE whether he will now make a statement on the future of the (above line). Mr. Peyton I am awaiting the views of the Greater London Council which I am obliged to consult and will, of course, consider these views before reaching a decision.

25th November Unremunerative railway passenger services Sir John Gilmour (Fifeshire, East) asked the SSE whether he will publish in respect of each unremunerative railway passenger

service the amounts he has undertaken to grant under section 39 (1) of the Transport Act, 1968, the length of the undertaking and the amount of grant which will be paid in the applicable years. Mr. Peyton I regret that all of the information is not readily available. The following information gives a general picture of the undertakings which have been given:-

The following services were given undertakings in 1968

(see cols. 147-9 of "Hansard")

The following had their undertakings renewed or were given new undertakings in 1969 (see cols. 149-53 of "Hansard") (substantially the same list as that included in the written answer given by Mr. Frederick Mulley (then Minister of Transport) in the House of Commons on 18th December, 1969, and as reproduced in our special supplement "Subsidies to passenger services" distributed to members of RIS with progress report no. 83 of June, 1970, plus undertakings given to London commuter services in 1969).

British Rail (late trains) Mr. David Reed (Sedgefield) asked the SSE whether he will give a general direction to British Rail to undertake an inquiry into ways and means of informing passengers at unmanned stations of late running of trains. Mr. Eldon Griffiths No.

15th December British Rail (finance) Mr. Jessel (Twickenham) asked the SSE how much deficit he expects of British Rail in 1970-1 and in 1971-2 and how he proposes to finance or reduce any such deficits. Mr. Peyton The Railways Board expects to make a small surplus in both years.

Intercity rail services (radio telephones) Mr. Gorst (Hendon, North) asked the SSE whether he will give a general direction to British Rail requiring it to authorise private firms to act as sub-contracting suppliers to British Rail to provide a radio telephone service to enable passengers on intercity services to communicate through the Post Office telephone network. Mr. Eldon Griffiths No.

16th December London Transport (fares) Mr. Prentice (East Ham, North) asked the SSE what is his policy in connection with the report of National Board for Prices and Incomes on the decision of the Greater London Council to raise London Transport fares. Mr. Michael Heseltine Responsibility for fares in London rightly rests with the London Transport Executive and the Greater London Council.

Mrs. Joyce Butler (Wood Green) asked the SSE if he will seek powers to enable him to require that fare increases are not made by London Transport without prior consultation and approval by the Transport Tribunal. Mr. Graham Page No.

London-Manchester line (electrification) Mr. Normanton (Cheadle) asked the SSE what is the total cost to date of the electrification of the London to Manchester line; and what requests he has received from the Railways Board for further capital expenditure. Mr. Eldon Griffiths Electrification from Euston to Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham was completed in 1967 at a cost of about £90 million. Extension to Glasgow at an estimated cost of £25.2 million was approved in February of this year. My rt. hon. Friend has received no requests from the British Railways Board for further capital expenditure on major electrification projects.

British Rail (subsidy) Mr. Selwyn Gummer (Lewisham, West) asked the SSE on the

basis of what regional figures of the subsidy paid to British Rail he decided to withdraw that subsidy and how much of it was attributable to the loss on inner-city commuter traffic. Mr. Elton Griffiths Grant is paid towards London commuter services as a whole. Separate figures for inner-city services are not available.

Goods vehicles (size and weight) Mr. Rankin (Govan) asked the SSE if he will give an assurance that he will not permit an increase in the size and weight of goods vehicles. Mr. Michael Muir-Wilson (Walthamstow, Eas.) asked the SSE whether he has yet reached a decision on the proposal to increase the maximum weight of goods vehicles to 44 tons. Mr. Peyton I have decided not to allow the maximum weight of goods vehicles to be raised above 32 tons. I am principally concerned that greater efforts should be made to reduce the noise, congestion and pollution which lorries cause, and to improve their ability to operate within the physical limitations of our road system. I am, therefore, publishing draft regulations on noise, smoke and engine power. I propose also to allow some change in weight limitations within the maximum of 32 tons to reduce the length of vehicles needed to carry a given load. There will be no increase in size.

18th December Machynlleth-Pwllheli railway service Mr. Nicholas Edwards (Pembroke) asked the SSE if he will make a statement on his policy as regards grant-aid for the Cambrian Coast railway passenger service from Machynlleth to Pwllheli. Mr. Peyton I am now paying grants totalling some £350,000 a year to the British Railways Board in respect of this service. A cost/benefit study carried out by the Economic Unit of my Department was published at the beginning of the year. Its conclusion was that the costs of retaining the line were substantially greater than the quantifiable benefit to the community of retention. I have, therefore, told the British Railways Board that it is unlikely that I shall renew the grant undertaking for this service when it expires at the end of 1971, unless I have by then refused consent to a statutory proposal to withdraw the service. If the Railways Board publish a statutory closure notice, a decision will not be made until all the normal consultations have been held and full consideration has been given to all the factors involved.

1971

14th January Mr. J. H. Osborn (Sheffield, Hallam) asked the SSE whether he will make a statement about renewal of unremunerative railway passenger grants.

Mr. Peyton Because I am still considering the whole question of grant for non-paying passenger railway services, I have decided to limit any undertaking to renew a grant to two years at the most. I must also make it clear that any undertaking is without prejudice to the withdrawal of the relevant service, within the period of the undertaking, if the due closure processes have been completed.

On this basis, grants have been renewed on 76 services for two years and on 21 services for one year as shown in the table.

On the London computer network, I have renewed grant for one year, but it will be reduced in amount to take account of the Government's intention that, by 1973, these services should no longer depend on Exchequer help. The services, both paying and non-paying, which make up the network are shown in the table.

I have refused applications for grant for six services, four of which were for renewals, the

other two new applications. I do not consider that these cases satisfy all the statutory or administrative requirements for grant.

There was no application for the Glasgow-Aberdeen service. It now pays.
(Cols. 112-16 of "Hansard" give the tables)

BOOKSHELF

✓X LIGHT RAILWAY TRANSPORT LEAGUE. The way ahead - with Speedrail. (1970)
unpriced. 12p., illus., map.

This booklet, excellently produced, is in effect a revised version of the League's publication "Speed-rail: a low-cost rapid transit system", which was briefly reviewed in progress report no. 82 (March, 1970), p. 5.

It is stressed that transport in great urban centres is an international problem and examples of existing rapid transit systems in American and European conurbations are the subjects of the illustrations.

This little work is, however, concerned with the possibility of rapid transit in this country, especially in the West Midlands. A suggested scheme for the Birmingham area, which was drawn up by a joint committee, on which this Society was represented, is described in detail.

The address of the hon. secretary of the Light Railway Transport League is 64 Grove Avenue Hanwell, London, W. 7. (not as given in the last progress report). X

TRANSPORTATION in the seventies. January, 1971. 4 p.

This is a leaflet published jointly by the Pedestrians' Association (4, College Hill, Cannon Street, London, E. C. 4.) and the National Council on Inland Transport (396 City Road, London, E. C. 1).

It is packed with good sense. On railways, the societies state: "We believe that no other means of transport is capable of taking the place of the railways and that the railways are indispensable to the well-being of the country ... We urge, therefore, the re-invigoration of the railway system, which is capable of carrying a much greater quantity of goods and passengers, thus relieving the pressures on the road system. The railways should be the primary mode of transport for bulk and mass freight ... Consideration should be given to re-opening of closed railway lines capable of serving the community equally as well as improved or proposed new roads ... Where railway closures have taken place, particularly of branch lines, consideration must be given to their being re-opened as light railways with reduced operating costs. Such branch lines can act as valuable 'feeders' to the main line services. The social necessity of re-opening many branch lines is emphasised by the drastic curtailment of rural bus services which is taking place and the failure of road transport to provide an adequate alternative public service for the travelling public when rail closures have taken place."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

The greatest curse

I am a member of the newly-formed Wessex Branch of the RIS, (the members have been good enough to elect me as their Technical Adviser) and I read with great interest the letter from Mrs. S. Bell in the December progress report.

Whilst heartily agreeing that the motor car is a great curse, it is not the greatest - that distinction being reserved for the heavy lorry, light lorry, bus, and (I'm sorry to say) train in many parts of the country by reason of the fact that they all use compression-ignition engine (the so-called diesel, which is quite different in one most essential respect from Dr. Diesel's invention).

A very carefully prepared scientific paper running to some 400 pages, entitled "Atmospheric pollution by the carcinogenic substance 3,4 benzpyrene," by Shabad and Dikun - translated into English 10 years ago (since when nothing whatever has been heard of it) showed, among many things, that a compression-ignition engine had produced more than fourteen times as much of this very deadly cancer-producing substance than a comparable petrol engine, on test.

Some time ago the head of one of our big diesel manufacturers was reported as saying that, if all cars had diesel engines, the air pollution problem from cars would trouble us no longer. The reason given was that these engines produce very little carbon monoxide. But no reference was made in the report to 3,4 benzpyrene, the pollutant the compression-ignition engine produces all the time it is running, and in much greater quantity when idling in a traffic jam than when cruising along. Not only does this stuff, being solid particles (about 1/50th of the diameter of a smoke particle), lodge in the lungs but it gets into drinking water supplies, since the particles, which remain indefinitely, in time fall to earth and, through drainage, into rivers. They are too fine to be stopped by any filtering arrangements if subsequently drawn into the intakes of water undertakings.

Please do anything you can to make these facts known. They have been known science for thirty to forty years, according to a chemist friend of mine - and there are something like two million c.i. engined vehicles, the bulk of them running all day all the time, in service in the United Kingdom. I have devoted many years to trying to get an improvement. There is a bus in service now with a modification of mine which greatly reduces the emission of this substance. The trouble is to overcome resistance of vested interests to change of any sort.

Flat 1, Sunnymead, Winchester Road,
Waltham Chase,
Southampton.

J. A. Butler

(Member of the Institute of Patentees & Inventors)

REPORTS FROM BRANCHES AND AREAS

We regret that this feature is much shorter than usual, owing to difficulties caused by the postal strike.

BRANCHES

London and Home Counties

✓✗ The public inquiry into the proposed closure of the Epping-Ongar section of the Central line took place in Ongar on 20th January. The Branch Committee was particularly disturbed, because, although London Transport admitted that there would be hardship during rush hours, no additional alternative facilities were proposed. Further, it was stated that, because of staff shortages, existing bus services could not be guaranteed. This could also cause difficulties to parents visiting children at a boarding school for the handicapped on Sunday afternoons, when the existing bus service is already infrequent. The Branch is co-operating with the local action group in its fight to save the line. ✗

✓✗ The Branch held a very successful meeting on 25th January when we welcomed Mr. A. L. Williams, formerly MP for Hornchurch, as our guest speaker. He gave an interesting and informative talk on the subject of "Railways and Parliament". In it he outlined the sort of things a backbench member could do to assist the promotion of railways as a modern form of transport and the difficulties he had encountered. He also stressed the considerable influence wielded by the civil servant who advised ministers on technical matters. ✗

The next branch meeting will take place on 24th March when we will be addressed by the director of the German Federal Railways Freight Agency for the UK. A visit to a signal box is also projected.

✓✗ A social cost/benefit study of the Ashford-Hastings line is to be undertaken by Reading University. A public meeting held in Rye towards the end of 1970 was addressed by a number of local MPs on the need for the line's retention. ✗

The Branch has approached Southern Region, British Rail, with a request for information about mileages, fares and rail/road links to be included in the Region's timetable. SR regretted, however, that it was unable to accede to this request at the present time.

✓✗ British Rail has published a proposal for the withdrawal of the passenger service from the Bletchley to Bedford (St. John's) line. The Branch Committee is concerned, as it suspects that the withdrawal of subsidies for the London commuter network will lead to further closure proposals, the curtailment of off-peak services or further drastic fare increases. ✗

A plan published by the Greater London Council, although stated to be only a planning exercise, proposes many closures of lines and stations in the Greater London area. The Branch Committee believes that this could well be a blueprint for further massive closures and is watching developments closely. Any member who would like to know more about the lines included in these plans should contact the Branch Secretary.

✓✗ Mr. J. W. Barfield, a vice-chairman of the Society, has attended a recent meeting of

the Kentish Town-Barking Joint Committee. This body is still very active and is strongly supported by local councils.

Midland Region, British Rail, has issued a programme of very cheap excursion trains. These will run from various points in the London area during the year under the slogan "Hop on a Merry Maker." This is a welcome development and British Rail is to be congratulated on its enterprise. ✕

Wessex

✓✕ The formation of a new branch is always a notable event in the history of this Society, so that we are delighted to record that our Wessex Branch came into existence at a meeting held in Southampton on 21st November. Hearty congratulations are due to the energetic members in the district who have made this possible. The new branch has completely absorbed our old Areas of Mid-Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and includes the eastern half of the former Somerset, Dorset and Western Hampshire Area. ✕

The Wight Locomotive Society hopes to run steam trains between Haven Street and Wootton, a distance of $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles. Details from:- Hon. Secretary, W.L.S., 27 Carmarthen Avenue, East Cosham, Portsmouth, PO6 2AG.

AREAS

Devon and Cornwall

Sidmouth Junction station (re-named Feniton, after a nearby village) will be re-opened to passenger traffic on 3rd May.

The old station at Falmouth was closed from 5th December and a new passenger halt in Avenue Road replaced it from 7th December.

Merseyside

✓✕ Shortly after our last progress report went to press, it was announced by British Rail that it proposed to withdraw the passenger service from the Liverpool Central to Gateacre line. The Acting Area Representative has objected to this proposal on behalf of the Society. By early February, over 1,400 objections had been received by the Transport Users' Consultative Committee, including one from Liverpool Corporation. ✕

✓✕ Work has commenced on the inner loop line in central Liverpool. The development director of the Merseyside Passenger Transport Executive thinks that this should be the first step towards a rail subway system under the city. ✕

On the New Brighton-Wrexham line, the northern terminus of weekday trains became Birkenhead North with effect from 4th January, as foreshadowed in our last report. Sunday trains still run through to New Brighton.

✓✕ Merseyside PTE has started talks with British Rail on the possibility of increasing the frequency of diesel multiple-unit trains between Neston and Birkenhead North on weekdays, with the provision of extra halts and car parks. ✕

Neston Urban District Council has suggested that the line should be electrified and the PTE has offered its plan as a short-term alternative.

✓✗ The Liverpool Lime Street to Southport passenger service is threatened with withdrawal, as it is no longer to receive a Government grant. As announced in the House of Commons on 14th January, this is one of six services for which grant applications have been refused on the grounds that they fail to "satisfy all the statutory or administrative requirements." The experimental bus/rail link at Formby, however, is proving a success, according to British Rail. ✗

North of Scotland

✓✗ As has been feared for some time, British Rail has now published proposals for the withdrawal of the passenger service between Inverness and the Kyle of Lochalsh. As Kyle trains share the same metals as trains going to Wick and Thurso as far as Dingwall (18¾ miles from Inverness), the proposal, if implemented, would mean the closure of the 63½ miles section between Dingwall and Kyle. This is the second such proposal within a period of seven years.

Our Area Representative is working in partnership with the Scottish Railway Development Association in opposition to the present proposal. We note with satisfaction that a group at Aberdeen University is undertaking a social/cost benefit analysis of the service provided by the line.

To say that this is no ordinary line is indeed an understatement. According to the January issue of Design: "Most of British Rail's great scenic railways have gone. But the most dramatic and exciting of all, the one with perhaps the most tourist potential, is still open ... The decision is inexplicable to anybody who thinks the Highlands should have any sort of viable future." ✗

The Pedestrians' Association is equally dismayed. In the winter (1st quarter), 1971, issue of its official journal, Arrive, a writer states "... nearly 50 miles of roads required for a replacing bus service remain single lane and the new stretch of road, with 1 in 7 gradients (and, since opening, already once blocked by a fall of 3,000 tons of rock), seems more hazardous than the route it was intended to replace. All roads in the area become blocked by snow a number of times most winters ... "

Purchase of five miles of the former Highland Railway from Aviemore to Boat of Garten is being sought by the Scottish Railway Development Association. It is intended that a passenger service on the line should be operated by the Strathspey Railway Company on behalf of the SRDA.

OTHER NEWS

England

A 250 mph hovertrain link between London and Manchester is to be studied under a £36,000 Government contract announced in late November. The study is expected to take six to nine months.

A tiny section (Rushey Platt Junction-Swindon Town) of the former Midland and South

Western Junction line is expected to be temporarily re-opened in the spring for the conveyance of stone from Merehead Quarry (see progress report no. 82 (March, 1970), p.5.). The stone is to be used on the M4 motorway, which has obliterated the disused formation of railway between Swindon Town and Chiseldon.

A new station at Stoke Gifford is planned. It would be called Bristol North and the projected advanced passenger train on the London-South Wales route would call there. This would cause more freight trains to run via Stroud and it is reported that restoration of double track between Swindon and Kemble is under consideration by British Rail.

The Lydney-Parkend line closed to all traffic from 1st February (see progress report no. 84 (September, 1970), p.10). The Taunton-Minehead passenger service was withdrawn from 4th Jan.

Wales

✓ Proposed withdrawal of the Machynlleth-Pwllheli passenger service has been published by British Rail, although the draft Sunday service to operate on the Cambrian lines during the coming summer shows a considerable improvement in connections at Machynlleth and Dovey Junction as compared with those which applied last summer (see previous progress report, p.12.) ✕

On the Talylyn Railway work has started on a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile extension to the foot of the Altrwyll Incline. The task is expected to take four years.

Scotland

Ayr Branch of the National Union of Railwaymen is urging British Rail to restore passenger services on the Ayr-Kilmarnock line, owing to recent reduction in the local bus service. The line, closed to passenger traffic in 1968, is still open for freight.

Beattock station (Carlisle-Carstairs line) has been proposed for closure to passenger traffic by British Rail.

EDITORIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Editor : Mr. L. G. Hipperson, Flat 1a, 12, Alexandra Drive, Liverpool. L17 8TD.

Sub-Editor : Mr. H. R. Purser, 30 Staines Road, Feltham, Middlesex.

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 June), material must be submitted to the appropriate editor so as to reach him by Saturday, 1st May (except that subsequent urgent late news will be accepted by Mr. Hipperson up to 8th May).

PUBLISHED by the RAILWAY INVIGORATION SOCIETY

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

General Secretary: Mr. J. M. Stanley, 12, Westcombe Park Road, London. S.E. 3.

Membership

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

Vice-Presidents:

Sir John Betjeman, C.B.E.

Lord Kinross

Lord Popplewell, C.B.E., J.P.

John Arlott, Esq., O.B.

The Very Rev. J. H. S. Wild, M.A., Dean of Durham

Torquil Nicholson Esq., B.Sc., A.M.I.E.E.

PROGRESS REPORT NO. 86MARCH 1971MEMBERS ONLY SUPPLEMENT: ISSUE NO. 6PASSENGER TRANSPORT EXECUTIVES

✓~~X~~ On 5th December a meeting took place in Birmingham between certain RIS branch and area representatives and Mr. A. Bevan of the Railway Development Association. Those present came from the London & Home Counties and Wessex Branches and the Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham conurbations. Also attending was Mr. J. W. Barfield, a vice-chairman of the RIS. The Newcastle-upon-Tyne conurbation, the remaining district covered by a passenger transport executive, was not represented and an apology for this was received from our Northern England Branch.

Mr. Barfield in the opening address said that the meeting was the first of periodic conferences between allied societies in the field of railway retention and modernisation.

Mr. B. Cole, a member of the RIS, gave a talk on the work of the West Midlands Rapid Transit Joint Committee, on which he represents this Society. Further information on the activities of the Committee was given by Mr. Bevan. He stated that the West Midlands PTE was strongly supporting the closure of the North Warwickshire line and the permanent closure of the Snow Hill Tunnel. Mr. Bevan said that the setting up of the WMRTJC had not been a move to merge societies, but that the purpose of the Committee was to give general advice and to produce a common policy.

Then followed a wide-ranging discussion on transport problems within the areas covered by the passenger transport executives, in particular the position of railways. Mr. Barfield emphasised that bus operators were to provide feeder services to railways; that was to say, the PTEs were to take responsibility for all transport - buses and trains. Nevertheless, the basic position of the PTEs was one of bus operators. He questioned whether PTEs were interested in co-ordinating local rail services. Moreover, would the Government allow them to carry out such co-ordination? Mr. Johnson (Greater Manchester and North Lancashire Area) said that the South-Eastern Lancashire and North-Eastern Cheshire PTE was expected to take over the railways in the Manchester area within the next twelve months. Mr. Barfield read out a letter from Mr. Mains, secretary of the Northern England Branch, giving details of Tyne-side bus services. There was, said Mr. Mains, little indication of rail service developments within the district covered by the Tyneside PTE. On express bus services, he stated that these

had disadvantages, e.g. loss of freight traffic if railways were abandoned and roads built in their place.

Discussion then passed to consideration of bus v. train services and new rolling stock. Mr. Byrne (Merseyside) and Mr. Barfield spoke on the new Liverpool-Southport rolling stock and the merits of high-capacity rolling stock. Mr. Barfield mentioned the booklet "The future of London transport", which made it clear that the Greater London Council realised the benefit of rapid transit.

When it came to the summing-up part of the meeting, Mr. Bevan said that there was need to have something attractive that gave a saving to the public. Practical examples of transport integration were also necessary. Mr. Barfield said that he considered the main interest of the PTEs to be buses. We would, he said, have to wait and see if Westminster would try to interfere with the transfer of railway running to the PTEs. He urged local co-operation between the Railway Invigoration Society and the Light Railway Transport League and contact with the universities. The Cooper Brothers formula was a stumbling block to the operation of railway lines by the PTEs. ✕

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

A notice and agenda of the 1971 annual general meeting of the RIS is enclosed with this members only supplement.

MEMBERSHIP LIST

A list of all members - corporate and individual - as at August, 1970, has been duplicated. Any member who would like to have a copy should write to the General Secretary, Mr. J. M. Stanley, of 12, Westcombe Park Road, Blackheath, London, S.E.3.

KNOW YOUR REPRESENTATIVE !

The following information supersedes that given in members only supplement no. 1, as amended in subsequent supplements.

BRANCHES

London and Home Counties Greater London, Essex, Surrey, Kent, Sussex, Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire.

Branch Secretary: D. J. Martins, 54 Canonbury Road, London, N.1.

East Suffolk and East Norfolk Boundaries: Felixstowe, Ipswich, Stowmarket, Norwich, Great Yarmouth, the coast.

Branch Secretary: Mrs. K. M. Sharman, 1 New Court, Fritton, Great Yarmouth
Norfolk.

Northern England Northumberland, County Durham, and the North Riding of Yorkshire (with special responsibilities, for the time being, for Cumberland, Westmorland, the West and East Ridings of Yorkshire, and the Furness district of Lancashire)

Branch Secretary: R. K. Mains, 114, Manor House Road, Jesmond
Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE2 2LY.

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

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

AREAS

Devon and Cornwall Area Representative:

A. E. Wilkinson, 17, Daneshay, Northam, Bideford,
Devon.

Greater Manchester and North Lancashire Bounded by (but not including) Ormskirk, Ashton-in-Makerfield, St. Helens, Widnes, Crewe, Congleton, Buxton, Holmfirth, Todmorden, together with north Lancashire (except for the Furness district) Area Representative:

P. R. Johnson, 33 Hurdsfield Road, Stockport, Cheshire,
SK2 7ND.

Merseyside Bounded by the coast from the mouth of the river Dee to that of the river Ribble, Ormskirk, Ashton-in-Makerfield, St. Helens, Widnes, Runcorn, Chester (including all those towns except for the last named), an imaginary line down the centre of the Dee back to its mouth.

Acting Area Representative:

L. G. Hipperson, Flat 1a, 12, Alexandra Drive,
Liverpool, L17 8TD.

Norfolk (North and West) Excluding that part of Norfolk covered by the East Suffolk and East Norfolk Branch. Area Representative: M. R. Thomas, 16 King's Lynn Road, Hunstanton,
Norfolk.

North and Central Wales The counties of Anglesey, Caernarvon, Cardigan, Denbigh, Flint, Merioneth and Montgomery and that part of Shropshire which lies north of the Shrewsbury-Aberystwyth line and west of the Shrewsbury-Crewe line (including those two lines); also that part of Cheshire which is not in any other area.

Area Representative: Position vacant.

North of Scotland Counties of Caithness, Sutherland, Ross & Cromarty, Inverness, Nairn, Moray, Banff, Aberdeen. Area Representative: F. G. Thompson, 31 Braeside Park, Balloch,
Inverness.

N. B. It is intended to publish amendments to the above list in future issues of this supplement

Defunct Areas

Mid-Hampshire and Isle of Wight Areas have been absorbed into the territory covered by the new Wessex Branch. Somerset, Dorset and Western Hampshire Area has been dissolved and its eastern half transferred to the Wessex Branch. Three Counties Area (Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire) has ceased to exist, owing to lack of support from members.
