

In view of the trends in rail passenger operations and discontinuance proceedings, we do not believe that significant segments of the last remaining long- and medium-distance intercity rail passenger service will survive the next few years without a major change in Federal and carrier policies.

Changes in Federal policy are urgently needed, and a comprehensive governmental review of the present and future need for intercity rail service should be undertaken at once. The Northeast Corridor Project involves only a limited part of the problem. Beyond that, the existing governmental environment does little more than weakly support that level of service which the railroads, themselves, can afford. The quality and quantity of that service are deteriorating. The forces underlying this trend grow stronger. Present programs - public and private - cannot reverse this decline. And we do not believe that any significant action will be taken until a consensus is developed on whether a national intercity rail system is needed. The national ambivalence toward the problem not only fosters inaction and inconsistency in governmental policy, but it encourages railroads to continue the present trends.