

We do know that a number of trains have been eliminated in this fashion; for example, the curtailment of Erie-Lackawanna metropolitan service in 1967. On balance, the relatively steady levels of commuter patronage from 1961 to the present would substantiate the conclusion that large-scale discontinuances of primary commuter service have not occurred.

In the few commuter cases decided by the Commission, our approval of discontinuances has been based on the losses caused by commuter service and one or more of the following conclusions:

- (1) The cessation of service affected lightly patronized lines;
- (2) Adequate alternative transportation existed;
- (3) The service would be continued by a governmental agency on a contract basis with the carrier; or
- (4) Continuation of the service would create a real and immediate threat to the carrier's solvency.

A summary of most rail commuter cases considered under section 13a and abandonment proceedings under section 1(18) are set forth in our recent report to the Senate Subcommittee on Housing and Urban Affairs. Even with the threat of future or present carrier bankruptcy, the Commission has been extremely reluctant to reduce essential commuter service.

In requiring the carriers to continue providing needed service despite their weak overall financial condition and the losing nature of such services,