

Could you give us some idea now, or does this involve any first study, as to what might reverse this decline, or is it a natural thing?

What I am trying to get at now: people are trying to move faster. I was just wondering whether or not it might be more appropriate to wait and see if we can get a little reading on the rapid transit program that we have just initiated, and which has hardly gotten off the ground. In fact, it has not gotten off the ground. Wouldn't that be the proper time to look into these problems, rather than looking at them now, when we have no earthly idea as to what effect the rapid transit system might have?

Mr. TIERNEY. We feel, as we have indicated in the report, Mr. Watson, that the northeast corridor—the high-speed ground transportation project—is just part of the problem. That, in effect, is a project which relates to highly, densely populated corridors and attempts to determine whether or not improved services will attract the public and result in economically viable service.

What we are discussing here is intercity service outside of the densely populated corridor area. There has been much concern expressed here and elsewhere as to whether or not we are to have that service.

Many people feel that we should. It is toward this question which the study would go. The study would determine a Federal policy in this particular area.

Do we need an intercity system? If we do, how much do we need and who is to bear the cost?

If in certain areas we feel we need an intercity system, will it be a burden, for example, or cost a lot of money to maintain it?

This is the area we are talking about, as distinguished from the highly, densely populated corridor area.

Mr. WATSON. When you refer to an intercity operation, are you referring to the intercity other than the northeast corridor then, intercity within States, or intercity—

Mr. TIERNEY. Intercity-interstate trains.

Mr. WATSON. Intercity-interstate?

Mr. TIERNEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. WATSON. That puts you into a new area; does it not?

Mr. TIERNEY. Oh, no, sir.

Mr. WATSON. It would extend your jurisdiction. Heretofore, it primarily rested with your State regulatory agencies; did it not?

Mr. TIERNEY. Yes. Well, the only area it would extend our jurisdiction would be the last train. We are suggesting that when we come down to an application before the Commission which comprises the last train intercity between two cities, that under those circumstances the jurisdiction would rest exclusively with the Commission.

Mr. WATSON. Would be exclusively of the Interstate Commerce when it involves the last train.

Mr. TIERNEY. The last train, sir.

Mr. WATSON. Up until that point, it would remain as it is presently.

Mr. TIERNEY. That is right, sir.

Mr. WATSON. With the State regulatory agencies.

Mr. TIERNEY. Or with the Commission when interstate trains are involved if the carrier so elects.

Mr. WATSON. You said earlier that it is not spelled out as to who