

services results in no benefit to the public but rather reacts to its detriment in further weakening the nation's rail system.

Yours very truly,

W. T. RICE, *President.*

THE WESTERN PACIFIC RAILROAD CO.,
San Francisco, Calif., July 8, 1968.

HON. HARLEY O. STAGGERS,
House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN STAGGERS: The legislation proposed by the Interstate Commerce Commission which seeks to amend Section 13a of the Interstate Commerce Act dealing with passenger train discontinuance, and calls for a one-year study of railroad passenger service by the Department of Transportation, would work a severe hardship on the Western Pacific if enacted.

For the second time we have pending before the I.C.C. the proposed discontinuance of the California Zephyr between Oakland and Salt Lake City. Reluctantly we have sought relief from the staggering losses we are suffering in the operation of this train. In 1966 the deficit was in excess of \$500,000, and in 1967 it rose to over \$1.2 million, a burden which is unconscionable for a small railroad like Western Pacific.

We, and others, have explored every possible avenue short of downgrading the high quality service of the Zephyr in search of remedies to our chronic losses on this train, but without success. Continued operation of the Zephyr is causing a tremendous financial drain which can only lead to serious impairment of our posture as a vital, competitive rail carrier of freight in the growing areas we serve.

The proposed legislation will cause further delays in obtaining our long-sought relief from this loss burden. Examination of the records in both Zephyr discontinuance proceedings (F.D. No. 24277 and F.D. No. 24918) will show that a reversal of the problem in the future is hopeless and that the deficit can only worsen the longer the train is operated. Additionally, very large capital expenditures are necessary in the immediate future for rebuilding or re-equipping the Zephyr if its high standards are to be maintained.

I therefore urge you to carefully weigh the extremely detrimental effect that the proposed legislation would have on this carrier's efforts to meet the press of rising costs in order to remain an effective and viable competitor in and through the area we serve.

Respectfully,

M. M. CHRISTY, *President.*

(The material referred to by the RLEA on p. 182, follows:)

[Advertisement from New Yorker magazine, Apr. 13, 1968]

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