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### Congressional Record S. 21230 - The Energy Crisis Expansion of Amtrak Service

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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flights and laying off hundreds of pilots, flight personnel, and ground crews; with the Defense Department, under the Emergency Defense Act of 1950, having allocated to it hundreds of millions of barrels of fuel; with the arrival last week of the last oil tanker from the Middle East, the energy crisis is being brought closer to home. The developments which I have just enumerated do not comprise the whole picture by any means, but are only indications of things to come.

There is talk of carpools to reduce the number of automobiles on the road, thereby decreasing the amount of gas used, but it is, as yet, only talk. There is the Alaska pipeline bill signed into law by the President recently, but it will take from 3 to 5 years before the oil begins to flow from the North Slope. There is the story in today's newspapers that Secretary of the Interior Morton will very shortly call for private bids on six oil bearing shale areas in Utah, Colorado, and Wyoming. There is the fact that we face no more imports of oil from the Arab nations which indicates that, at the very least, we face a winter and spring of shortages; shortages which may go into the next year and the next, as well.

The President has indicated that we can become self-sufficient in energy by the year 1980, but this is a debatable point which only time will prove or disprove.

I have advocated the rationing of gasoline because I think it would be more equitable for all our people. There has been talk of an increase in the Federal gasoline tax from the present 4 cents per gallon to anywhere from 30 to 40 cents per gallon. This would be most inequitable because those of us who could afford it would be able to pay it, but those of us in the lower- and middle-income groups would not. It would be an unconscionable tax.

It appears to me, on the basis of the crisis which confronts us and which, in my opinion, will become worse in the months ahead, that one way to ameliorate our difficulties would be to increase public transportation facilities. In that respect, the railroads of the Nation are, at the present time, being booked to capacity, and reservations in some areas, such as between New York and Washington, have, I understand, been placed up to 3 months. I would hope, therefore, that immediate attention would be given to the expansion of Amtrak in all areas of the country. Then, as airline flights are reduced in number, some of our smaller cities and towns perhaps taken off airline schedules, and as the use of automobiles decreases, the void thus created will, to a limited extent, be filled.

**EXPANSION OF AMTRAK SERVICE**

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, as Senators know, I have been campaigning for several years, now, to bring about the expansion of Amtrak passenger train service in my State of Montana, especially around the southern route of the old Northern Pacific which now receives 3-day-a-week service. About the only good thing that has come out of the energy crisis, in my opinion, is an opportunity for Amtrak to expand and up-

**THE ENERGY CRISIS**

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, with the airlines decreasing the number of

grade its passenger train service not only in Montana but throughout the Nation.

I believe that since the beginning of Amtrak, the people of Montana have demonstrated that they are willing to use passenger trains if they are offered efficient service and updated and modern equipment. I continue to receive reports about passengers being discouraged by Amtrak personnel. I hope that this period is coming to a halt and that all Amtrak and railroad personnel will pursue with vigor a renewed effort to build the Nation's passenger train service. In Montana, not only would I like to see daily service on the southern route as rapidly as possible, but I think that the current energy crisis calls for a review and restoration of service to cities like Helena and Great Falls, which must be served by spur lines connected with major routes. Also, some additional attention must be given to service between Butte and Salt Lake City formerly provided by the Union Pacific Railroad.

A recent editorial in the Great Falls Tribune, one of Montana's largest daily newspapers, stated:

One thing seems certain: With the prospect of limited gasoline supplies for 2 or 3 years, more travelers are going to consider the train again when planning a trip.

I am in complete agreement, and I hope that other Members of Congress will join me in asking that Amtrak expand its service throughout the Nation and that the committees in Congress give full support to Amtrak in any such effort.

Mr. HUGH SCOTT. Mr. President, quite recently I was in Erie, Pa., and I visited the plant of General Electric, where a number of railroad passenger cars are being built, using many American products, using, indeed, some Canadian steel, as well. These cars are being built for the New Haven Railroad, for Amtrak, and for Metroliner use; and it has been very difficult to make sure that allocations of Federal and other funds continue for the number of trains already under construction.

I very strongly support, and have really ever since I have been in the Congress, better passenger rail transportation. I have advocated it and have introduced legislation pertaining to it, for disaster legislation for relief of the railroads, for legislation to aid the rail lines and to encourage passenger traffic. I have supported Amtrak legislation, and so forth.

I join with the distinguished majority leader in urging expansion of Amtrak. It has been successful. My own experience has been on the New York-Washington line. Service is prompt, courteous, and friendly in great contrast with the old "discourage-the-passenger attitude" which was a very nasty evasion of responsibility on the part of the railroads in the past. It still continues, I am afraid, in some areas of the country.

Just 2 weeks ago I advocated expansion of Amtrak from New York to Erie, Pa., to cover the southern tier of New York counties and the northern tier of Pennsylvania counties, and on to Detroit and Chicago as a necessary aid to relieving some of the pressures on energy which would be involved in other forms of travel.

I would like to see Amtrak given much broader support. I would like to see some improvement and extension of Amtrak—for example, from Philadelphia and Harrisburg to Pittsburgh, and from Pittsburgh to Erie. My colleagues from other States have expressed the same belief. First of all, we need action on the Midwest and Northeast bill which will be coming up shortly. That will be a step in the right direction.

We need to be sure that the Interstate Commerce Commission keeps a close eye on the railroads to make sure that they do nothing to discourage passenger traffic that should be promoted. Some railroads think that the profit is in freight cars and the passenger be damned. That attitude must go.

We have a whole generation of people who have never ridden on a train. They would be very happy to do so. I believe that this would relieve the energy crisis.

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, if the Senator will yield, the train passenger service has increased remarkably in the past couple of weeks. And out in my part of the country, the service cannot begin to meet the demand.

I have felt for a long time that the railroads are, in effect a part of our national defense system. They are tied most closely to our security. And as the gasoline crunch becomes worse, people are not going to be able to travel as far as they would like to do.

This would be one way in which the void could be filled as automobiles continue to decrease in numbers on the road, as I am sure they will, and as the airlines reduce their schedules, and as all of these fears which confront us at the moment come to a head.

This is the time to face up to the need for an expansion of Amtrak so that it can become a nationwide service once again as it used to be in what some of us refer to as the good old days.

Amtrak is becoming more efficient and more knowledgeable as to how a railroad should be run. I would hope that the impetus would carry forward.

Mr. HUGH SCOTT. Mr. President, I would give one illustration from the past as to how alternative modes of transportation are used in time of shortage. During World War II, people believed themselves to be progressive. They believed that they should get rid of the trolley cars. The people in Philadelphia did not get rid of the trolley cars, and we had far less trouble then in Philadelphia than in those places which did get rid of the trolley cars.

If we go back to the railroads, people will have more fun and also more energy.