



ELECTRIC RAILROADERS' ASSOCIATION, INC.

Grand Central Terminal

89 East 42nd Street/New York, N. Y. 10017/212-986-4482

13 May / 82 (start)

Dear E.R.A. Member:

First things first. You are entitled to an apology and have it. Several mailings back, two issues of Headlights went out together, along with a flyer about the 1982 convention and a ballot. There was an apparent gap between the two Headlights. The one in the middle, April-May/80, went out of regular sequence last summer. With this one, 1980 is complete.

You should have had your ballot much earlier. The envelope was ready for mailing at least three weeks before the permit bulk mailing on March 6. Because that shipment ran to 595 lbs., we needed more than two men to get it to the post office in one lot as we must do on our permit. We simply could not get enough fellows together on the same Saturday morning. That is why the ballot and other contents were late.

There were no biographical notes because candidates did not submit them. Please understand that some candidates only accept nomination on assurance that they have no chance of being elected. The by-laws say there should be two candidates, at least, for every office. They do not say how a Nominating Committee can find two people willing to do the work.

----- DUES POLICY

Dues are payable on a calendar year basis. Members have until December 31, 1982 to pay dues for 1982. After that date, they will not be acceptable. In the past, some members have been concerned that because Headlights is consistently late, they risk getting nothing for their dues. Thus, they will want to pay for 1981 when they get this final 1980 issue. In the past, we have accommodated them although it makes extra work for the guys doing the record keeping. We will not do that in the future. Anyone wishing to pay for any past year or for 1982 may do it until the end of 1982. After Dec. 31, we will not accept dues for 1982 or any earlier year.---Should any of this tiny group want 1981 Headlights or 1982 Headlights after the close of this year, they will be available at the retail price of \$12 a year. Sorry, fellows, but that's the way we have to do it to keep our sanity. I think you will find that policy in other clubs.

The E.R.A. officers have been trying to put the outfit back on its feet. In some ways, we are succeeding; in another, we fail: paid memberships for 1982 are about 1100, less than half what we had six or seven years back. We touched about 2400 before 'money' problems stalled Headlights and broke up the former excellent editorial team. The biggest falling off is in the New York Metropolitan area.

There were once about 400 members in our local area. Now we have about half that.

E.R.A. owes a big THANK YOU to the members listed below, all of whom sent in contributions with their 1982 dues. The contributions are deductible on income tax forms.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Lt. Col. Robert C. Anderson--\$15 | 51. Herman L. Retter--\$20 |
| 2. Rolf S. Augustine--\$10 | 52. Thomas A. Roell--\$10 |
| 3. Richard Ballinger--\$ 5 | 53. Brian A. Roman--\$10 |
| 4. Harold G. Baxter--\$10 | 54. Leo J. Ross--\$15 |
| 5. Russel H. Borry--\$ 5 | 55. Joan Safford--\$ 3 |
| 6. Gregory H. Bower--\$ 5 | 56. Manuel Sanudo--\$10 |
| 7. John J. Burger--\$10 | 57. John W. Schrader--\$ 5 |
| 8. Randolph W. Chalfant--\$ 5 | 58. E. Alfred Seibel--\$10 |
| 9. Herman J. Cohen--\$ 5 | 59. John J. Skvarla--\$ 5 |
| 10. George E. Condoyannis--\$ 5 | 60. Don Snowden, Jr.--\$20 |
| 11. James P. Crawford--\$10 | 61. Peter D. Sokolov--\$5 |
| 12. Edgar P. Crownover--\$ 2 | 62. R. T. Spetz--\$20 |
| 13. Charles J. Dengler--\$ 1 | 63. Robert M. Stacy--\$ 4 |
| 14. William B. Denning--\$ 5 | 64. Bruce Stern--\$15 |
| 15. Richard H. Dickie-- 5 | 65. John W. Stock--\$10 |
| 16. William A. Elander--\$10 | 66. A. D. Tawlyn--\$ 4 |
| 17. Edwin J. Fellows--\$10 | 67. Sheldon Teicher--\$ 5 |
| 18. William F. Fennelly--\$10 | 68. Harold M. Tepper--\$10 |
| 19. Charles L. Fischer--\$ 2 | 69. Henry H. Thayer--\$10 |
| 20. James K. Gibson--\$ 5 | 70. Norman R. Therkelson--\$10 |
| 21. Emery W. Ginter--\$15 | 71. James A. Toman--\$ 5 |
| 22. William S. Gorton, Jr.--\$10 | 72. George Tyson--\$ 5 |
| 23. Robert K. Hampton--\$10 | 73. Louis Urbach--\$ 2 |
| 24. Lt. Col. R. Y. Harriss--\$15 | 74. Wesley M. Vaughn--\$ 2 |
| 25. Lewis Hitch--\$ 1 | 75. Ronald Weinfeld--\$ 1 |
| 26. William C. Hoffman--\$ 5 | 76. Rev. Samuel P. Worthington--\$ 5 |
| 27. George W. Hofmann, Jr.--\$ 5 | 77. Charles Wroblewski--\$ 5 |
| 28. Donald M. Ives--\$10 | 78. Barclay Zimmerman--\$10 |
| 29. Howard D. Jewett, Jr.--\$35 | 79. Robert D. Zink--\$ 2 |
| 30. George Johannesen, Jr.--\$ 2 | 80. George Strombeck--\$10 |
| 31. Asahi Kamei--\$10 | 81. David Svendsen--\$10 |
| 32. Gerald P. Keefe--\$ 5 | 82. Allen F. Bell--\$25 |
| 33. George R. Klair--\$ 5 | 83. George E. Proudley, Jr.--\$ 1 |
| 34. David E. Klein--\$10 | 84. Frank W. Schlegel--\$14 |
| 35. SFC Marvin S. Klein--\$10 | 85. Chales W. Donaruma--\$ 5 |
| 36. Gary E. Kleinedler--\$10 | 86. Bernard W. Recknagel--\$ 1 |
| 37. Alfred J. Kleinsmith--\$ 1 | 87. Robert B. Petersen--\$15 |
| 38. Fred Koeser--\$ 5 | 88. Bruce M. Brown--\$ 5 |
| 39. Ronald Kupin--\$10 | 89. W. R. Hartwig--\$20 |
| 40. Peter J. Kuhn--\$ 5 | |
| 41. Steven Lichtenstein--\$ 4 | |
| 42. Thomas G. McBride--\$2.50 | |
| 43. Seymour C. Mickler--\$100 | |
| 44. Warren K. Miller--\$ 5 | |
| 45. Sol Negrin--\$ 1 | |
| 46. Foster M. Palmer--\$ 5 | |
| 47. Alfred L. Platt--\$ 2 | |
| 48. Louis A. Potter--\$ 3 | |
| 49. Robert J. Powers--\$ 5 | |
| 50. Lewis Press--\$10 | |

Note that it is easy to add YOU if you want to be listed with this group.

In mid-March, we were advised by the Post Office of the death of Edward F. O'Connor, of Melrose, Mass. Mr. O'Connor held membership number 3694 since Dec. 1967. On his application he indicated that he had spent some years working for the Bay State St. Ry.

A NON-PROFIT EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOUNDED IN 1934

DEVOTED TO THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF ALL TYPES OF ELECTRIC RAILWAYS

PUBLISHERS OF HEADLIGHTS, THE MAGAZINE OF ELECTRIC RAILWAYS

Among the material left to E.R.A. by its founder, E. Jay Quinby, is some sheet music. There are several dozens of copies of each of four pieces:--On A Good Old Trolley Ride; Electric Railway March; Brooklyn Daily Eagle Bridge CRush March; The Pacific Electric Trolley Waltz. As long as they last, you can have a copy of [redacted] each for a LONG self-addressed envelope bearing postage for two ounces. I cannot read music and have no idea what these sound like but I love marches.

If you are interested in New Jersey's trolleys (and you should be--they were great), member Felix E. Reifschneider has a number of titles that would be good in your library. The latest is Joe Eid's book about the Jersey Central Traction (no relation to the railroad). I read it and I liked it. It is a very complete account of one of the smaller properties that stretched eastward from South Amboy through Monmouth County. Why not send Felix a card and ask for his price list? Reach him at P.O. Box 88, Fairton, N.J. 08320. One more thing: Felix often has a variety of used trolley books on hand at very reasonable prices. Incidentally, Joe Eid himself has been in hospital for a serious operation. We all send best wishes.

If anyone who paid 1982 dues as much as four weeks back does not have a 1982 membership card, please tell the Membership Secy., Jeff Erlitz.

****Grand Central Terminal: City Within The City****, an exhibition at the New York Historical Society, Central Park West & 77th St., NYC, May 28 to October 3. \$2 fee Weds. thro Sun., discretionary charge on Tuesdays. Hours: Tues-Fri, 11 to 5; Sat., 10 to 5; Sun., 1 to 5. Closed Mondays. 8th Avenue local trains (AA) to 81st St. station. Probably worth a visit.

In case you have any doubt----there is now plenty of money in the bank to cover all Highlights through the end of the 1982 publications. Also, that Life Membership account is full. The improvement in our position is due to highly successful conventions and several fan trips the past few years, as well as casting off the money-losing publications business. Too, we have been miserly in general. But we must buy a typewriter to replace this beast which doesn't even have quotation marks on it.

We have been working on our mailing list. It needs work before it can go into a computer. We see that many of the old plates were not too well prepared. First, too many of them arbitrarily abbreviated first names although the members furnished full names. Some overseas readers' addresses lack postal codes. We want to do it your way. If your names are John J. Doe or J. Joseph Doe, we want to call you as you wish to be called unless your name is too long to fit in a machine. If you live in England, we want to show your postal code. All of this will be cheaper to do before we put it into a computer since every change will cost us. Tell us of any change you want and, above all, tell us right away when you move from one place to another.---We will drop the Mr. from all plates.

WEEPING, WAILING and TEETH-GNASHING DEPT.

If you didn't hear about it, our big government railroad, Conrail, has cut off the juice in its overhead and is tearing down the wires. This permits conservation of electricity. Here's our publicly-owned railroad showing us how to handle energy.

As a contrast, some figures:--four years old, for sure, but international statistics are slow to accumulate (or reach ERA). These countries had the following route miles of electrified line in 1978---Netherlands, 1098 mi. (61 per cent of total); Norway, 1508 Mi. (58); Switzerland, 1782 mi. (99); Austria, 1632, (48); Sweden, 4278, (62); Italy, 4944 mi. (48); Britain, 2249 mi. (29); Japan, 5280 mi. (40); Germany (the free one), 6265 mi. (35); France, 5332 Mi. (27). Spain, Portugal, Finland, Belgium, South Africa all have bigger proportions of electric railroad than we do. Some of these, I know, have added to their electric mileage since 1978.

NEW YORK---March 17th saw the MTA award a contract for 325 new subway cars to Kawasaki. They are destined to replace cars now in service on the IRT lines (the small profile lines, the numbered lines). Not much detail as to what the appearance will be but they will be the shorter version of NY car with all longitudinal seats.

As expected, various politicians, industrialists, union leaders, etc., damned the MTA for not buying American. It happens that the Japanese Government is financing the deal at an interest cost impossible to match in any other way.

On May 18th, the MTA ordered 825 more cars. These will come from Bombardier, of Montreal. The Canadian Government is financing these at an interest cost of only a little over 9 per cent. These cars are to be assembled in [redacted] Vt., and will use lots of American-built parts. Still, the question has been raised: why not Budd, a U.S. firm? Primarily, cost. And, as some of us know, Budd is IN the U.S. but is entirely owned by the [redacted] August Thyssen steel works of Germany.

The Budd firm (as of May 21st) was seeking an injunction to prevent the purchase from Bombardier. It asserts it should have the order because it would have been low bidder had not the Canadian government underwritten the Bombardier bid with a loan at low interest rate. Neither the German government nor our own offered to help Budd. Lawyers for the Authority say Budd has no case.----Bombardier now has orders for 123 cars for New Jersey Transit, 180 subway cars for Mexico City, 26 light rail cars for Portland, Ore., and ten high speed trains for VIA.----The New York order will bring cars identical to the 325 which Kawasaki will build. This involves licensing, of course.

A quotation from the New York Times of May 6th:--Transit officials said yesterday that half the city's subway cars and most of its buses would have air-conditioners this summer, but that much of the equipment might not work.---The chief of the bus division said 3835 buses had air conditioners but only 2196 work.

At the same time, the TA's chairman told state legislative bosses that this year's anticipated shortage would be \$300,000,000 to \$400,000,000- Give or take a hundred million, the Authority wants a lot of cash. He traced the problem to reduced Federal gifts, holes in last year's State tax package and perpetually rising costs. Arbitrators just gave TA's blue collar workers a pay raise of 20 per cent. To make up the gap, the governor plans new taxes on telephone companies, which do not vote.

One of the TA's hardest working officials acknowledged to the press that one of the problems in the maintenance shops is the inability of foremen to communicate with new employees who do not speak, read or understand English. One TA manager told me they stare blankly, never understanding a thing. Of course, they were hired outside normal civil service channels. Politically expedient??? Probably. Yet it is odd to see our TA hiring aliens when American mechanics are out of work. Someone said these new guys took only a moment or two to learn how to endorse their pay checks.

Last time I wrote, I told you that NYC's Landmarks Preservation Comm. had designated as a landmark the Manhattanville viaduct on the No. 1-Broadwayline. The City Planning Commission objected. The designation stands by virtue of the action of the City's Board of Estimate and Apportionment, upper house of the municipal legislature.

New York's MTA will exercise its option to buy 186 more commuter cars from Budd. That increases the number from 130 to 316. To be known as the M-3 type, they are for the Conrail lines north of the city and for the Long Island RR. The first of them should be delivered late this year. 70 of the first batch will go to LIRR and 60 to Metro-North. The additions will give the LI 104 more and Metro-North 82. GE will supply motors and controls.

Work proceeds on electrification of the Harlem line beyond North White Plains. This summer, work will start on the high level platforms for stations between there and Brewster. Track work now under way will require use of bus connections at times this year.

Member Robert Abbott sent me a copy of the May 1982 issue of REASON magazine, a monthly. It has a most interesting article on the New York subways. Worth reading; lots of material for thought.

For those who haven't been in town lately, all cars assigned to NYCTA's No. 7-Flushing line are now painted fish-belly white. Sort of like chalk. As one rider put it:--They'd had that primer on them for months. When are they going to paint them?

NYCTA management again threatens higher fares. The suggested rates vary from \$1.05 to \$1.25. UNLESS there are more generous donations from the State and Federal vaults. In the witchcraft that rules the metropolis, this threat is thought to be very strong medicine for organizing raids on the public purse. The theory is that it will rouse the voters to hysteria and they will then pressure such types as congressmen, assemblymen and state senators. This sort of hexerei was most effective in the days of Mayor 'Red Mike' Hylan (1918-25). Hylan probably didn't invent this brand of political football but he sure knew how to play it. Of late years, it has been less effective, perhaps because the public is numb. The fare has gone from a nickel to six bits in about 30 years and you cannot find one politician who got the boot because of it.

NEW JERSEY TRANSIT began regular operation over the newly electrified five miles on that part of the old New York & Long Branch RR from South Amboy to Matawan, 5.2 miles. That was on April 25th. Regular m-u cars provide service. With this extension, wires now extend 25.2 miles from Penn Station, NY. CN THAT LINE.

The tramways of BRUSSELS, the Belgian capital, are getting 81 high speed, three-section, double end articulated trolleys. They will carry numbers in the 10000 series. The first car is due by the end of Sept. 1984, the second by Dec. 31, 1984, two more by Jan. 31, 1985, and the balance one a week after that. They will have 60 seats and room for 173 standees. The length is given as 30.4 meters, almost 100 feet. They are to replace the 7000 series that appeared in 1951.

From far away: metropolitan Kuala Lumpur, in Malaysia, seems set on a light rail rapid transit system. The plan contemplates about 52 kilometers of route (about 33 miles) to be built in five stages.

Back to NY for a moment: you may remember the wreck on the TA on July 3, 1981. A train left Sutter Ave. for Manhattan and crashed into a stopped train just inside the tunnel portal near Utica Avenue. The motorman died. The National Transportation Safety Board has finished its report on the matter. It said Power and Signal staff neglected to notify the command center when sporadic power failures began two hours earlier. It said that when the command center was notified, it gave 'improper and confusing' instructions. It said that the motorman did not even apply the brakes although he could have seen the other train. It said the TA has not adequately trained personnel about procedures to follow when signals fail.

I hope the April Fool's Day dateline has no significance here:--a private company, the American High Speed Rail Corporation, has been formed to raise \$2 billion to build a new rail line or a new service (not clear in the story). The result would be Shinkansen style 'bullet trains' operating at 170 MPH between Los Angeles and San Diego. The idea is that about 100 trains a day would cover the 127 miles in 59 minutes. The company is studying other possible routes in the Midwest, Florida and Texas.

Member Stephen B. Renovich, of Vancouver, sent a very comprehensive description of the rapid transit line now being built in Vancouver and suburbs. Work started on March 1st. Known as an Advanced Light Rapid Transit system, it will extend from the SeaBus terminal in the city (near the old CPR) station to New Westminster. The line will be about 13 miles long, partly at grade, partly above and partly underground. Cars will be in pairs, with eight-car trains possible. We'll try to tell more on this in Headlights.

The NYCTA managers sent to its board a proposed budget for the next fiscal year. They want \$2,300,000,000, an increase of \$300,000,000 over the present year. The increase is easier to grasp if you look at it in smaller terms. It's an increase of \$821,917.80 a day, or \$34,246.57 an hour or \$570.78 a MINUTE. That's not the total--- just the boost over the last year.

The report in the paper said the extra money includes \$113 million to cover the recent arbitration award. If there are 35,000 blue collar employees, as the paper said, each would get an average of \$3223 a head. The budget asks 128 new subway motormen and 119 new bus drivers. There being no prospect of increased service to carry less people, they may be used to abolish a lot of swing runs. The City Council President's office immediately criticized the budget because, it said, it includes an increase of 18 per cent in administrative costs but only three per cent (excluding labor, presumably) for the subways and nothing for bus service except labor. This budget is up for discussion while the board arranged public hearings on fare increases.

In connection with the above, a friend at the TA told me the other day he went into the Public Relations office for the first time in months and found the staff possibly double what it was a year ago. New layers of management grew where none grew before. Everyone needs an assistant, I guess, with an impressive title. When you start talking to old timers about 'Information Access Specialists', they say, 'Oh, yeah--senior file clerks'. The salaries are more impressive, too.

The elephant may be very like a tree, very like a fan and very like a snake, and very like a rope but the TA is very like a dairy cow with a milker on each spigot going overtime.

Someone told me that subway trains are to get new electronic signs just like those things in buses. Those are the ones with the little yellow dots that tell you to have a nice day or that the bus is out of service. With the abuse they take in Pothole City, some of them show designs like Rorschach ink blots. We can afford new cars and analysts by the platoon every week, but we can't find money to give a couple of maintainers screw drivers and have them fix the roll signs that don't work. And men who work in the shops tell you the Authority can't afford hot water in the washrooms and can't keep those rooms clean. I can't vouch for this as the TA does not invite me to inspect its washrooms or to take dinner with the transport barons on top of the World Trade Center.

One of our local members, a TA employee, told me of being on a train that got lost. The motorman and conductor, according to him, had a big argument on the P.A. system, trying to decide how to get back where they should have been. This (choose one) 1) delighted, 2) infuriated, 3) puzzled, 4) amused, 5) bored the passengers. (It made him blush)

Little by little, the 63rd St. tunnel nears completion, or, at least, the deck for subway use. No one mentions the LIRR deck any more. What happens when the subway part is ready? It ends a few hundred feet north of Queens Plaza, in Long Island City---really nowhere. It will be a great place to store cars that have no trucks instead of throwing them on their sides in the 239th St. yard. Or it can be used to grow mushrooms or maybe to grow bean sprouts for our many Chinese restaurants. Then, too, kids can use it to play Dungeons and Dragons.

The TA loves studies and it loves consultants. It did a study in Queens that so riled the Feds that the latter may not pay. The TA has used outsiders to gather data; it has collected its own. One in-house group plans mostly for rapid transit. It collects data and reasons from those to sensible conclusions. Its methods are ethical; it has no preconceived notions it wants to foist on the public to gratify personal whims and egos. The less said about the other group, the better.

One more thing: if you want to advance at the TA outside civil service channels, it helps to be brassy, arrogant and marry the right person.

Out in San Jose, Calif., there is to be a north-south light rail line about 27 miles long. 28 stations will serve this linethrough the Santa Clara valley.

London Transport is buying 90 cars from Metro-Cammell for the Jubilee line. 1938 vintage cars are used there now.

Goteborg, Sweden, has ordered 39 articulated trams and has an option to take 50 more. The first ones are due in 1986.----Istanbul, Turkey, is studying rapid transit.----Algiers is buying a design plan for six miles of rapid transit. A later seven-mile line is contemplated, too.----Mozambique, on the southeast coast of Africa, is studying the matter of electrifying its southern railway system with a view to connecting with electric rail line in Zimbabwe.----The state railways in Venezuela have ordered up \$429 million of track, signals, etc., and 93 cars from a group of German firms. The 20-mile line linking Caracas and LaGuira, on the coast, is to be in service in 1984.

Just about now, the first six miles of Helsinki's metro should be opening. By June of next year, the whole line, seven miles, should be running. There is talk of an eventual system of perhaps 32 miles. About 2 1/2 miles are in tunnel, blasted through granite. The broad gauge line will use 45 two-car sets. (Finland was a part of the Russian empire until its collapse in 1917 and the rail lines are of Russian gauge.) The third rail carries 750V dc. Seating is two-and-two, with each two-car set having 140 seats. Top speed will be about 55 MPH.

Last year, the Norwegian State Rys. opened a tunnel under the center of Oslo to connect the terminals serving lines from east and west. Now the City of Oslo is working on a tunnel to connect the suburban car lines from the western suburbs with the metro style lines on the east side. Unless the western lines have their power system changed, which is not likely right now, the effect will be to have the two sets of lines share a common terminal at Sentrum. The western lines now use nothing longer than two-car trains and they run on 600V, taken from catenary. The metro, with longer trains, uses third rail and 750V. The lines from the western suburbs now end at the National Theatre, in a tunnel. The new connection should be ready some time next year. While this is in progress, the Ekebergbanen, a trolley line to the suburbs, is to get 25 new six-axle articulated cars. That line, when I saw it some years back, used very heavy center door cars.

Also from the north, Stockholm is building a new four-mile loop. Blasting for the tunnel is finished. Cars built in the '50s are being rebuilt with new bodies. Trying to beat vandalism, the management will convert to neoprene seats. Stockholm already has about 65 miles of line in its T-Bana system.

From Denmark, news that the Danish State Rys. is ready to order 80 lightweight commuter cars for suburban services. The electric commuter lines are being extended about eight miles. And there is talk of a possible light rail line to the vicinity of the airport. Copenhagen did have a great trolley system not so long ago.

Back in 1966, Genoa, Italy, tossed out the last of its trolleys. Now it looks as if light rail is to return. The town has a mile-long tunnel that the trolleys used and that was a horror for buses trying to get through it.----Completion of electrification work now under way in North Korea will result in 85 per cent of freight being moved by juice by 1985.----The Polish dictator, Jaruzelski, announced that Warsaw will start work on an 11-mile north-south metro next year. It is hoped to open five miles by 1989.----Alstom displayed a mock-up of the French 'standard tram' on Feb. 25. It looks as if Nantes will be the first town to run the type, next year.----That project for electrification at Porto Alegre, Brazil, moves ahead. A Japanese consortium got a contract for 100 m-u cars. They will run on a route about 27 miles long and delivery is for 1983-84.----In Costa Rica, the quiet Central American country, electric operation has begun on a 60-mile line. 25kV, 60Hz.

Iranian State Rys. is about now getting its first two electric locos. Built in Sweden. Its first electric line is about 90 miles long and runs from the Russian border at Djulfa to Tabriz.----Cairo, Egypt, is to have a metro. Groundbreaking was in March.----On March 1, St. Etienne, France celebrated the centenary of its tramways by laying the first rail for an extension.----The Lindenwold line is to see through service of Atlantic City-Philadelphia trains, according to a British journal. NJ DOT would put up the money for ten diesel locos to haul Patco m-u's beyond Lindenwold.----Russia announced plans to build a metro in Riga, Latvia.

Interesting news from Holland:- Rotterdam was due to open the first part of its second Metro line, from Coolhaven, west of the center, to Capelsebrug, east of town. That's about five miles, of which the last mile on the east end is at grade. Next year, there will be a high speed tramway extension to the northeast. Trains will use third rail in town and catenary in the suburbs. Rolling stock will be articulated two-car sets, 50 of them built by Duwag.----In Paraguay, the President Carlos Antonio Lopez Railway, the important one, plans to electrify about 45 miles of line out of Asuncion, the capital.

NEW YORK: At 5:55 a.m. on Weds., May 26, my clock radio woke me with the news that B, D and QB subway service across the Manhattan Bridge was suspended. A cracked plate in the bridge caused this, not anything the TA did. With no service through the Grand St., Manhattan, station, it was closed. As I write this, QB service is out completely. B trains are running as shuttles from Coney Island to 36th St. The D route is being run as two routes:-trains from the upper end are reversing at Broadway-Lafayette while trains from the Brighton part of the line are taking their old route up Broadway to 57th St. N service is not altered, which means that only the north pair of tracks on the bridge are closed. There's been trouble with the bridge before this although when it was new, it carried the four rapid transit tracks AND four trolley tracks. Like everything else in NY, bridge maintenance is badly neglected and you can bet the City does nothing to stop use of the bridge by illegally overweight motor trucks. Engineers have been warning for years that all of the four great East River bridges are in a state of decay but the politicians find that there is not the publicity value in maintenance and repairs that there is in building new things. Engineers also have expressed concern over the state of the subway's river tunnels. Complaints and claims accompany the steady shower of bolts, nuts and other hardware from elevated portions of the rapid transit lines. What can you expect in a town where they never clean directional signs once they put them up and hardly ever wipe the lenses of traffic lights?

I complained to the local congressman and one of the senators about Conrail tearing down overhead. The former said he agreed with me (first time ever) and sent my letter to a House committee dealing with energy. The senator said he sent it to the head of Conrail, requesting a reply to me with a copy to him. I'm still waiting. I suspect neither congressional type had even heard of the matter until I told them.

The E.R.A.'s inspector of elections advises that all incumbents are elected again. That is, 1st VP-Bruce Lane; Recording Secy.-Frank Miklos; Corresponding Secy.-Joseph Prinzivalli; Membership Secy.-Jeffrey Erlitz; Treasurer-Gerald Landau. And it is time for you members to make YOUR suggestions for nominations to the Nominating Committee. I'd prefer to see a younger man as president.

I started this on the 13th and am finishing on the 26th. Any other news will have to wait for next time.

Sincerely yours,


Francis J. Goldsmith, Jr.
President