

with only a few coats of paint and a new roof needed to put it in near-original condition.

The Rocky Mountain Railroad Club has added its voice to the many who are calling for the preservation of this storied structure, and individual members are welcome to write Mayor Rowe and express their views on the subject.

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BATTLE TO CONTINUE CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR RAGES ON AS Right in the middle of the
ICC GIVES ROCK ISLAND PERMISSION TO DROP ROCKET four-state, three-railroad
battle to save the California Zephyr, another famed western passenger train has passed from here to eternity with nary (as yet) a whimper. The ICC on October 11, although noting that some service areas would be left with virtually no public transportation, gave the Rock Island permission to discontinue its Rocky Mountain Rocket between Omaha and Denver-Colorado Springs.

The order becomes effective 35 days from its issuance, or on November 15. The move will leave northwestern Kansas without rail passenger service of any kind, since the train is the road's last remaining varnish run west of Omaha. The commission observed that use of the train had dropped from an average of 96 passengers per trip in 1964 to 73.5 last year and 51.5 during the first six months of 1966. It was also noted that the railroad had discontinued all sleeping cars on the run, and had substituted a lounge car for the regular dining car.

Reduced rates have been in effect for some time on the Rocket in a move to lure additional passengers. But the operating loss now is running at an annual rate of around \$433,000. We certainly can't quarrel with the Rock Island for requesting abandonment under those conditions. But at the same time we can't help but wonder how much the road itself, in this day of unenlightened passenger operations, contributed to the loss. We wonder, possibly shed a sooty tear, and wave a sad farewell as the Rocket passes, hopefully, into a land where everyone rides the train.

In the meantime, the fate of the California Zephyr hangs in the balance as ICC hearings continue in various cities along its route. Colorado in general, Denver in particular, the Burlington and the Rio Grande have joined forces to save the train. Western Pacific, the outfit in the black hats, is losing ground rapidly and, in view of the adverse publicity it is receiving, had petitioned the ICC for new, low rates to encourage travel on the stainless steel train. The fares are now in effect, saving the sleeping car passenger \$32.50 from the regular first class tariff. The rollback pegs fares at the 1951 level.

Formal protests have been filed by many cities and groups in Colorado, with the Denver Chamber of Commerce going on record with the position that suspension of CZ service would not be in the public interest of Denver or the state. Western Pacific president Myron M. Christy points to a 1965 loss on the train of \$823,000 and says no deal. He added that wage costs and fringe benefits for train personnel have more than doubled since 1950, while revenues have increased only slightly. Four rail unions represented at the kick-off hearings, however, joined the majority in opposing discontinuance. Christy also cited rising maintenance costs, \$922,000 last year, and outlined a rehabilitation program that would cost each of the three roads involved \$1.3-million in 1967.

Utah has also gone on record as favoring the train's continuance, but has given as its reason only ski business from California. WP attorneys effectively argued against this, pointing out that California skiers don't have to go to Utah.

Hearings moved to Winnemucca, Nev., on October 21, where state officials openly

accused the Western Pacific of making a deliberate effort to discourage passengers on the Zephyr, calling present service "sloppy." The state's attorney general, Harvey Dickerson, said that ending the train "would not only affect public convenience and necessity, but would adversely affect Nevada's economy. It is ... apparent that Western Pacific has not as yet shown any justifiable reason for eliminating this fine train, which travels one of this country's most scenic routes."

And there, with the odds seemingly heavily in favor of the train, is where everything stood at press time.

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STILL TIME TO ORDER BOOKS. SPECIAL CLUB SOUVENIRS. IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS As a convenience to those members who may have delayed ordering merchandise, we have included another order blank with this month's "Rail Report." There is still time to do Christmas shopping for yourself or the railfan in your family. Many items carry special discounts to Club members, and some will be available for a limited time only. We will guarantee delivery in time for Christmas on all orders received by December 10.

We should point out that the special offer on the reprint of "Crofutt's Gripsack Guide to Colorado" expires November 15. This excellent reference work contains 165 pages reprinted from the original 1885 edition, plus 80 pages of rare photographs taken from the collections of the book's compilers, Club members Francis Rizzari, Dick Ronzio and Charles Ryland. The pictures were all taken during the 1880's, and many have never before been published. The book forms a complete guide to the Colorado of 75 years ago and should be in the library of every railfan and history buff. Special discount price is only \$10.00. But remember, this offer expires November 15.

A minor note: the order form lists on the front "vinyl travel gabs." This, of course, should be "bags." They are the same sturdy type issued by most air lines and several railroads (the Rio Grande has a special one for the Silverton). The price of just \$2.00 represents a tremendous savings over airport prices.

And a correction: the "Smoke Over ..." series should have been listed at \$4.95 a volume rather than the \$4.25 shown. Orders already received will be honored at the lower price.

For lack of a better place to put it, we should also make the following correction to the October "Rail Report." On page two, the steam pressure of the Rio Grande's #464 was shown as 2000 pounds. The pressure should be 200 pounds, since the little engine runs on rails, not flies. Our apologies for the typo.

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MANITOU AND PIKES PEAK ORDERS Manitou and Pikes Peak, the world's highest cog railway, recently placed an order for two new TWO NEW SWISS RAILCARS FOR 1968 diesel-electric railcars with the Swiss Locomotive and Machine Works at Winterthur, Switzerland. The 80-passenger cars, combination engine-coach units, will be similar to two other Swiss cars put in operation over the nine-mile road which runs from Manitou Springs (just west of Colorado Springs) to the summit of 14,110-foot Pikes Peak.

Each car will be 52 feet long, with all equipment located beneath the bodies. Two air cooled, eight-cylinder, 220 horsepower diesel motors with electric generators will provide power to boost the units up the amazing grade, which averages 12.5% and reaches 23% in places. The line also operates older U.S.-made Westinghouse diesel units with pusher type locomotives behind the passenger cars. A single steam unit remains as a stand-by, stored serviceable in the road's Manitou Springs shops.

M&PP officials cited a steady increase in business as making the purchase of additional rolling stock necessary. The season just passed was the best in the line's history, with passenger traffic up 35% over a year ago.

The new cars feature controls at either end, with the engineer on the uphill end

when ascending, on the downhill side when returning. The equipment has electric dynamic brakes plus an emergency system that stops the train automatically at a certain speed. Emergency brakes can be applied from either control panel to bring the car to an immediate halt. Each car will be equipped with a loud speaker system, radio communications, and extra-large windows. Delivery is expected in early 1968.

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MISCELLANEOUS BUT FASCINATING NOTE The European Railway Information Center in Berne, Switzerland, reported last month that 54% of all the trains in the world are powered by steam, a total of some 100,000! It would appear that this is one area in which the United States lags.

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SHOP 'N SWAP Shopping and trading apparently are at all-time highs among Club members as we continue to receive reports of satisfactory results from items listed in this column. There is no charge for this service; we ask only that no commercial listings be submitted. Send your ad to the editor by the 20th of the month preceding publication.

MARKER LAMPS -- WANTED, WILL BUY

Want oil or electric marker lamps, particularly oil, from any railroad, but especially the following: Milwaukee, Maryland; Soo Line; Colorado & Southern, Northern Pacific, Great Northern, Southern Pacific, Erie, Boston & Maine, Maine Central, Southern Railroad, Denver & Rio Grande, Lackawanna, Chicago & North Western. Write giving details and price. Edward G. Walker, Jr., 13 Stanley Oval, Westfield, N. J. 07090

LAMP BRACKET -- WANTED; TROLLEY SIGNS -- WANTED

Want to buy D&RGW cast iron bracket for caboose lamp. Also interested in obtaining roller type trolley destination signs from any city, and information about them. Bernard Kelly, 960 Grant St., Denver, Colo. 80203

RAILROAD BOOK COLLECTION -- FOR SALE

Have following books for sale to highest bidder, must bid on entire lot, current valuation, \$200. Titles: Railroads of Nevada, volumes one and two; Hear The Train Blow, The Giant's Ladder, The Last of Steam, Some Classic Trains, Locomotives of the Burlington, Nevada County Narrow Gauge, Gulf to the Rockies, Redwood Railways, Cab to Caboose, Steam's Finest Hour, The Nickle Plate Story, Age of Steam, Union Pacific, The Golden Rails, Mile High Trolleys, Locomotives of the KCS and L&A, Narrow Gauge to the Rockies. Also have "Rio Grande Southern Story" and "Rails Around Gold Hill" for sale on individual bids. All deals FOB Amarillo. Wm. O. Gibson, 1320 Van Buren, Apt. 2, Amarillo, Texas 79101

INFORMATION, PICTURES -- WANTED

Need historic information and old pictures of Conifer-Phillipsburg-Foxton-Evergreen area (southwest of Denver). Or does anyone know good sources of information? Will trade your photos and information for black and white prints or duplicate color slides of Colorado railroad subjects (state needs). Ted S. McKee, 5445 Caryl Pl., Littleton, Colo. 80120

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THOUGHT FOR NOVEMBER It seems that Pablo Picasso, while not making a great deal of sense to some people with his modern art, came through beautifully when asked to state his philosophies. Here is just one excerpt from five full pages of thought-provoking wisdom:

"The idea has been transmitted from generation to generation that happiness is one large and beautiful precious stone -- a single gem, so rare that all search after it is vain, all effort for it hopeless. It is not so. Happiness is a mosaic composed of many smaller stones. Each, taken apart and viewed singly, may be of little value; but when all are grouped together, and carefully combined and set, they form a pleasing and graceful whole -- a costly jewel."

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