

TRAIN TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION

Newsletter

December 1980



Train Travellers' Association,
61 Leila Road,
Ormond, 3163

Telephone :

The TTA Council extend to all Members, their families and our supporters and well wishers, the Seasons Greetings and Good Wishes for A Happy New Year.

TTA EXECUTIVES VISIT THE LOOP

On 11 December, 1980 at the invitation of the VicRail managers, TTA President Charles Sowerwine and Secretary Ken McIntyre visited the Museum station in the Loop to view its passenger amenities. Accompanied by Mr. Jack Draper of VicRail they walked through the Loop from Museum station to Spencer Street station for a first hand look at the track, signals and safety aspects.

Later at VicRail head office they discussed with Deputy General Manager Mr. Lindsay McCallum and Public Relations and Marketing officials VicRail's arrangements for informing the public of the projected opening of the Museum station late in January, 1981 and the benefits to travellers from using the station.

Suggestions from the TTA representatives were accepted for incorporation in the information programmes to be produced by VicRail.

GOVERNMENT DECISION ON LONIE RECOMMENDATIONS

The State Government has announced its decisions on the Lonie recommendations. They are: -

1. Closure of 4 suburban rail lines: City to Port Melbourne, City to Upfield; Newport to Altona and Williamstown.
2. Closure of 8 country rail lines including the Healesville, Mornington and Ararat to Portland lines.
3. Restricted services on the Camberwell-Alamein and St. Kilda lines.

This action of the State Government is a betrayal of its election mandate, is irresponsible, and has apparent political overtones.

Since coming to office in 1969, at every State election since, Mr. Hamer has stated that his Government's policy is to provide Victoria with "a fast, safe, reliable, regular, adequate, punctual, cheap and comfortable rail service". By closing down public transport services the Government is turning its back on these stated policies and alienating public transport users.

The Federal Government, through its oil price parity policy, is discouraging wastage of our dwindling liquid fuel resources. Every democratic government in the world is improving and expanding its public transport systems as a safeguard against the day when the world will run out of oil supplies.

Over the past 15 years the Victorian Government has initiated and paid for numerous strategy and transport plans, which have recommended improvements to our public transport, conservation of our energy resources, reduction in environmental pollution, and stressed the need for a strong central city district.

By closing down electrically operated public transport services and forcing the public to use liquid fuel for their transport needs the Hamer Government displays: -

- . a lack of wisdom by counteracting the Federal Government's policy of energy conservation;
- . economic irresponsibility in reversing over 15 years of studies and plans calling for improvements to public transport. It also contravenes world trends aimed at reducing environmental pollution and promoting fuel conservation, by forcing people to use more oil and liquid fuel and increase pollution;
- . political irresponsibility in that the Premier repeatedly stated that no decision will be taken on the Lonie recommendations without "full consultation with the community". No discussions were held with the community at any stage before a decision was made.

Our Association has repeatedly stated over the past year that the Lonie recommendations were prejudged, to be used by the Hamer Government to give a cover and respectability to its continuous policy of destroying our public transport system.

The people of Victoria must choose whether they want these regressive policies of closure and contraction or the alternative of improvement and development to ensure that our mobility can be safeguarded against the prospect of liquid fuel shortages.

- Ken McIntyre
Secretary.

A TALE OF TWO STUDIES:

The members of the Lonie Study team consisted of business men with no transport expertise, with a bias against public transport and a vested interest in the use of the motor car, being former executives of B.H.P..

In Ontario, Canada, the Government has set up a nine member task force to develop a new provincial rail transport policy, study commuter needs, long haul passenger and freight, and even resort area services in the province. The project includes a study of the potential for electrifying parts of the present Go service. The new double deck Go cars were designed for easy conversion to electric traction.

"I love trains", says Margaret Scrivener, Tory M.P. who will head the study team which will determine what kinds of rail services will be needed by the year 2000. (TRANS-ACTION No.4, Mar. 1980)

THANK YOU, HARRY GOW

The TTA thanks Harry Gow, President of Transport 2000 Canada, our sister organization in Canada, for his Seasons Greetings to us and for the wealth of information, Rail Travel News etc. that he has sent us on Canada's rail systems.

Mr. Gow was a founder of Transport 2000 Canada and has stepped down from the office of President since October, 1980.

NEW VENUE FOR TTA COUNCIL MEETINGS:

The Council will hold its monthly meetings on the first Wednesday of each month (except in January) in the premises of the Masonic Club, 6th. Floor, 164 Flinders Street, Melbourne.

Till December 1980, by courtesy of the Commercial Travellers' Club, we held our meetings in their rooms. Their closing time (7 p.m.) being too early for the whole agenda to be adequately considered, we have now hired a room in the Masonic Club for our meetings.

Members attending the meeting are requested to observe the dress regulations of the Club.

OBITUARY

We regret to record the death of Mr. Tim Berenyi of Ringwood, a long standing member of the TTA.

We offer our sympathy to Mrs. Berenyi and family.

We also offer our condolences to our Public Relations Officer, Patrick O'Connor and family on the death of his mother.

The Government's Plans and Ours: Further Action

The Government has decided to implement shortly a substantial part of the cuts recommended in the Lonie report.

While apparently Sandringham and Alamein services will be retained at a "reduced" level and a stay of execution has been announced for St. Kilda and Eltham-Hurstbridge, all the other metropolitan services are to go. There are big cut-backs in country services. Tram services will not be dismantled for the time being.

Our outcry has not yet been enough to stop the Government from its criminal intent to "motorise" Melbourne and make it into a mini-southern hemisphere version of Los Angeles, complete with dying city centre, pollution, and dependence on imported oil supplies.

The Government plan is to extend the South-Eastern Freeway along the Yarra bank, through platforms 10 and 11 of Flinders Street station, following the Port Melbourne and St. Kilda line bridge across the river, using the Port Melbourne line as a hook-up to the West Gate Bridge. The road would then veer north and re-cross the river, go over the railyards and use the Upfield line as a freeway site north, to connect with the Hume Freeway.

This plan would not only mean the end of public transport as a viable alternative to the motor car, by forcing tens of thousands of people to use road transport instead of their present rail transport (some 50,000 travellers a day being involved). It would also destroy the city. The city could not cope with the additional cars poured into it by the new freeway. In fact, the only city exit presently envisaged is on William Street. It is laughable to imagine more than a few hundred additional cars a day (each carrying 1.1 passengers on average) getting off on William Street, which is already jammed.

The rest of the cars replacing rail services would simply go to other destinations. Services and offices would continue to sprawl to outlying suburban districts, leaving the city to decline faster and faster.

The city would also lose the not inconsiderable number of country people who come in by train, were all country services eventually eliminated. Country rail traffic was 4.5 million trips in 1976, of which a major part is bound to and from the city. These are people who will shop in the city. If using a car or bus they are likely to avoid the traffic and stop at suburban shopping centres.

Both city and country people should remember that not one single Liberal or National Party MP actually crossed the floor to vote against the Lonie report. They have put up a front of opposition to the cuts, but at the time action really counted - the only time they could have effectively prevented the cuts - they voted with the Government, down to the last man. It will be important to keep this fact before the public. That is one of our first tasks.

The TTA however has a concerted plan of action drawn up at our Council meeting on 3 December. It includes three major parts: -

- . a deputation to the Premier;
- . a publicity campaign through petition and advertisements; and
- . a major public meeting to be held on the steps of Parliament House, probably at the time of the reconvening of Parliament in the first week of February.

The Secretary has already written to the Premier requesting that he see a deputation of four officers of the TTA. Since the Premier refused to meet us to discuss the bias of the Lonie report (we wrote in April and he replied --negatively--in August) we cannot be certain what kind of response we will get. But we do believe that, now that the Government has accepted the Lonie report, Mr. Hamer himself must accept responsibility. If he again refuses to meet us, we shall press this point wherever possible.

The publicity campaign is the most important part of our action plan for the moment. You will find enclosed with this issue of the Newsletter copies of the petition. We shall also be requesting the help of all organisations concerned with social and urban issues, or whose members are affected or (like Councils) who have an interest in public transport. But we count on you, our members, to take this petition to as many people as you can and to return it to us by 20 January, 1981. If you are a regular commuter, try to get signatures on your train. If your line is not one of those presently threatened, remind people that these policies mean the long-term abandonment of public transport in general; under the Lonie report and Mr. Maclellan, there is no hope for improvements in service. But also ask friends and neighbours to sign, or people at shopping centres, etc.. Even motorists have an interest, in that train travellers leave the roads free for them.

At the same time as we seek the help of other organisations in circulating our petition, we shall ask for their financial support for a major publicity campaign. We have in mind trying to get large newspaper advertisements, so we are talking in terms of thousands of dollars. If you know of sympathetic Councils or other organisations that we might approach, we would appreciate your letting us know. Similarly, if you are or know of marketing or publicity experts or graphics experts who would help, please let us know.

The third part of our plan of action is for a major meeting on the steps of Parliament House. We feel that this would get better media coverage than another indoor meeting: although more than a thousand people attended our public meeting on 26.11.80 and more were unable to find room, there was little media coverage. We are told that outdoor meetings held before 4 p.m. are more likely to attract television coverage, since crews are paid overtime after 4 p.m. and by that time the evening news is being put together. Thus we envisage a lunch-time meeting as one possibility. We would be interested in hearing members' opinions as to the best time to hold the meeting.

We have nearly a thousand members now. If each of you continues to write letters to newspapers and politicians, to circulate the petition and to call the publicity campaign to the attention of other organisations, and if each of you comes to our meeting in February, we may begin to make an impression on the Government, leading to a reversal of its stand as it prepares for the next election. The task of all of us is to keep the pressure up.

Dr. C. Sowerwine,
President

TTA's FIGHT AGAINST THE LONIE RECOMMENDATIONS

Since our last Newsletter, our main activity has been centred on our campaign against the Lonie recommendations.

The successful public meeting held in the Assembly Hall in Melbourne on 26 November, 1980 was the result of the combined efforts of our Council, members, and kindred Associations.

In the past two months TTA officials - Ken McIntyre, John Alexopoulos, Charles Sowerwine, Patrick O'Connor, David Bowd, Pat Minihan, Steve Howard and Ria Smit - have participated in and/or addressed public meetings at Healesville, Camberwell, Port Melbourne, St. Kilda, Coburg, South Melbourne, Hampton, Diamond Creek and on the steps of Parliament House.

We are contacting community and transport groups, unions, Shire and City Councils in Victoria, to join us in a giant publicity and protest campaign which will consist of a petition, publicity leaflets, advertisements in the daily newspapers and a protest meeting outside Parliament on the day Parliament reconvenes for the Autumn session.

We need and invite the support of all our members for these campaigns.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please address all correspondence to the Association as shown:


<p>The Secretary, T.T.A. 61 Leila Rd., Ormond 3163</p>

(TTA mail addressed to G.P.O. Box 251B will be re-directed temporarily by Australia Post)

TTA's NEW ADMINISTRATION

Since our inception in 1976 daily administration has been conducted in an honorary capacity by the Secretary, with the assistance of the President, Treasurer and a few Council members. This suited the small organisation we were until recently.

With membership pushing towards the 1000 mark the workload of daily administration, maintenance of records, correspondence, issuing receipts to new members, preparation of articles, media interviews, guest speeches at meetings, etc., has become a massive burden for the Secretary.

To ease the workload and also utilise the talents of Council members, the administration of the TTA in 1981 will be conducted through a Sub-Committee structure, under the overall liaison and control of the four main office bearers.

A list of these sub-committees, their members and contact 'phone numbers are detailed below. Other members wishing to assist are welcome to join by contacting the sub-committee members. It is envisaged that the sub-committees will meet on their own initiative.

Home Telephone No.

1. Membership Sub-Committee
Pat Minihan
Barry Gray
Douglas Sherman
Ria Smit
2. Newsletter Sub-Committee
Ken McIntyre
David Bowd
Pat Minihan
3. Publicity Sub-Committee
Patrick O'Connor
John Alexopoulos
Rod Bryant
Alan Parker
4. Line Co-ordinators
Steve Howard
Barry Gray
Ria Smit
5. General Sub-Committee
Douglas Sherman
Ken McIntyre
Rod Bryant
John Alexopoulos

Comparison of Rail Fares in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane

Following the 20% increase in VicRail fares on 1st August, 1980, only 10½ months after the previous increase, it is interesting to compare our fares with those prevailing in Sydney and Brisbane, the only other cities in Australia with suburban electric train services.

The graph shows the comparative rates as at September 1980 for weekly tickets in the three cities. Fares in Brisbane were increased by approximately 15% in October but are still well below the Melbourne rates.

Examples of weekly ticket prices (September 1980)

	10 km trip	20 km trip
Brisbane	\$3.30	\$4.75
Sydney	\$4.00	\$5.30
Melbourne	\$7.20	\$7.70

Looking at it another way, a weekly ticket in Melbourne costing \$5.30 allows travel over a section only 9 km long but for the same price in Sydney the distance is 26.53 km, nearly 3 times as far.

Again, for \$7.20 in Melbourne the commuter is limited to a section up to 13 km long whilst in Brisbane the same fare allowed travel over a 51 km section, almost 4 times as far.

Melbourne's fare structure (as shown by the graph) is very irregular which gives rise to anomalies such as that pointed out by Heinz Kuehlenthal in the September Newsletter. In Sydney the fare steps are more regular whilst Brisbane's fare structure is characterised by many small steps giving a very gradual rise in the fare as the distance travelled increases.

Both Brisbane and Sydney offer discounts of 1/6th of the weekly fare for every public holiday which occurs during the week. Likewise in both cities a 1/6th refund for every day that services are strike-bound is also allowed.

By contrast, VicRail does not give any allowance for public holidays and no refund for strike days unless the stoppage extends for 2 days or more between Monday and Friday in which case a 40% refund is made for 2 strike days, 60% for 3 strike days, &c.

In both Brisbane and Sydney yearly tickets cost 40 times the price of the corresponding weekly ticket in all fare zones. In Melbourne this ratio varies from 39.58 in zone 1 down to 36.64 in zone 8. This gives some amelioration in the rate for long distance yearly ticket holders in Melbourne but the annual rates here are still much higher than in Brisbane and Sydney with the exception of the shortest zone.

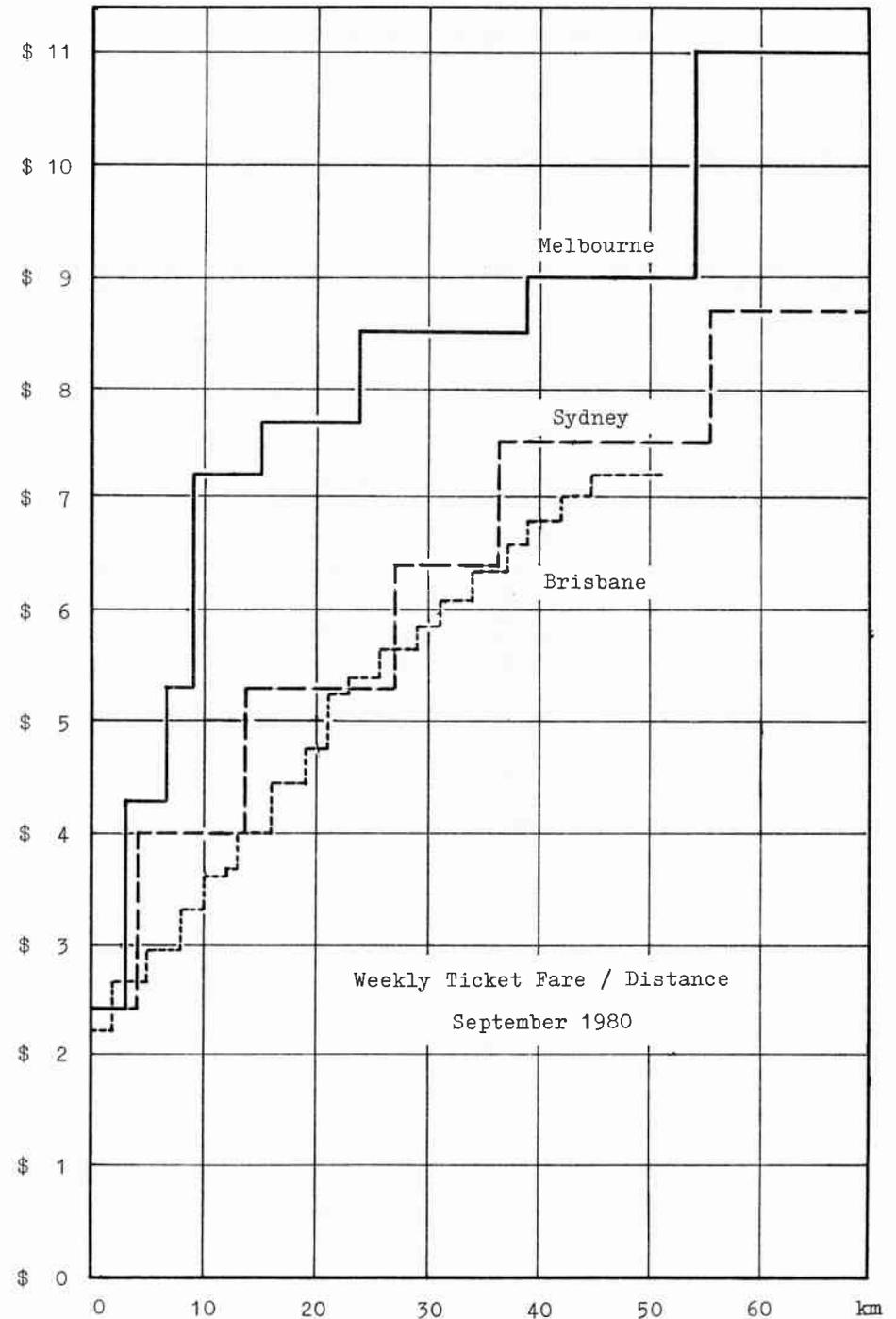
Single trip fares are also typically cheaper in Sydney and Brisbane in line with their lower weekly rates.

Sydney and Brisbane still have some trains similar to Melbourne's "red rattlers" but the new air-conditioned suburban trains in Brisbane and inter-urban trains in Sydney provide much higher standards of comfort and faster travel than anything VicRail offers in Melbourne.

There has been a marked increase in train travel in Sydney this year due to improved services, stable fares and the curtailing of freeway development.

Despite the poor standard of the Melbourne suburban service and the already very high fares the Lonie enquiry has recommended further hefty fare rises at more frequent intervals!

- David Bowd



The Layman's Case Against The Lonie Reports

The Victorian Transport Study Reports, named after its Chairman, Mr. Lonie, a former executive of B.H.P. will have serious social, economic and political consequences for the State.

The Study was a result of a resolution in the State Parliament in June 1979 from the Opposition, calling for a study into all the freight and passenger transport within Victoria and to and from Victoria.

Why was any study needed to inquire into what was wrong with our public transport: every man and his dog in the State knows what is wrong with it: -

Years of wanton neglect by successive State governments in the form of inadequate funds for capital expenditure, new trains and equipment.

Lack of positive transport policies and bias towards car travel.

Inefficient management.

Union strikes and disruptions, which eroded user and potential user confidence in its reliability.

Public and media apathy and indifference.

These are just a few of the main causes which have reduced our public transport services to a shambles. Our Association has repeatedly shown that VicRail's services are nothing but a daily slapstick comedy show. Some of its features are:

entries in the Guinness Book of World Records for the worst records of train unpunctuality; running a passenger train in the wrong direction for 2 hours; an annual wastage of \$90 million in lost wages to workers and of \$450 million in lost production and sales due to the daily record of late and cancelled suburban trains each year.

The answer to what is wrong with Victoria's public transport is well known as are the solutions, viz: an urgent injection of funds, more new trains and trams, positive transport policies, efficient management. But a government whose transport policies are subservient to the oil companies and car manufacturers, has no will to act.

Numerous other studies and reports have called for improvements to the transport system but have not been implemented. About 11 years ago a 12 man State government committee proposed a \$2616 million expansion to the system which covered an extra 150 kms. of rail track, 3 new suburban routes, extensions to 8 other lines etc. The Deputy Chairman of the Committee - one R. J. Hamer - later became the Premier and promised Victorians "A Great Transport Revolution".

In the 11 years of his stewardship as Premier we have had 12 Country rail lines closed down, 37% less patronage and an eight-fold increase in the rail deficit. After our Association's frequent highlighting of these and more disasters the Premier was forced on 8th July, 1980 to confess that "VicRail is a Mess".

Any study group must have experts on the matters to be studied and be free from any bias or vested interests.

The composition of the Lonie group was a stacked pro-car triumvirate consisting of two former B.H.P. executives whose interests lie in the oil and car field, and the Chief Planner of the C.R.B. - another from the car lobby group. Because the parliamentary resolution setting up the Study did not lay down any guidelines the Transport Minister, whose pro-car feelings are well known, used this study group as a front to give a report he wanted, to give his pro-car policy some respectability.

In May this year, on behalf of 10 other transport and community groups, we protested to Mr. Hamer about this biased study group and called for its replacement (if a study was deemed necessary) with an impartial, truly representative study team. Four months later the reply received from the Premier dated 15.9.80 was: "I am not prepared to discuss the dismissal and replacement of the current Transport study. I consider that the Minister has done the right thing in having a critical review of transport carried out, and the initial reports show that a thorough task has been performed". That a thorough task has been performed viz. the recommendation to close down most of the public transport services, we are well aware of today. The appointment of one of the members, Mr. Hodges, to the Railway Board is further evidence that the Minister wants him to preside over the closure recommended by the study.

Since Mr. Hamer gives his seal of approval to a biased study group with vested interests in the matter under study, can we expect that the committee members of the next Royal Commission to inquire into crime will consist only of guests of Her Majesty from Pentridge?

The recommendations of this Lonie (or is it looney?) group are so absurdly pro-car that they are laughable, except for the tragedy that the government will implement them.

The main recommendations are:

- . Closure of 8 suburban rail and 7 trams routes; curtailment of night and weekend services on other routes.
- . Closure of all Country rail lines and their replacement of their services with buses.
- . Deregulation of restrictions on the carriage of freight, or a shift from rail to road for intra and inter state freight.
- . Frequent and hefty fare increases to eliminate the need for subsidy.

The Lonie recommendations are superficial, short sighted, short term in essence and do not take into account any social costs or effects. They can be attacked on many fronts - denial of freedom of choice on travel; energy aspects; economic costs; social and political aspects.

Closure of rail and trams routes will deny people living in those areas freedom of choice on travel. Parents who send their children especially to private or tertiary institutions, by train or tram to another suburb, will be restricted in that they will

be forced to admit their children to institutions near their homes, irrespective of denomination or standards.

Half of Victoria's population have no driver's licence; one quarter have no cars; many more are without a second car. Aged and infirm who cannot drive, people who live in the country and commute to the city to work - all these will lose their freedom to travel when public transport is closed down.

Mr. Lonie and the Transport Minister who also frequently talks of consumers having a choice (only when it is for cars) deny them this choice. Mr. Lonie in his report on the carriage of cement argues strongly that commercial companies must have a choice of transporting their consignments by the mode they desire. Yet he denies this freedom to people but wants it for the companies in which the B.H.P. has interests!

The Study's bias in favour of the car is best illustrated in its Fuel for Transport report. The report recognizes that Melbourne trams are five times more energy efficient than cars in peak hours and that trains are eight times more efficient, but barely mentions that trains and trams use electricity and not petrol. A Greyhound Lines of Canada Study (1979) claimed that air lines get 17 passenger miles per gallon of petrol; cars get 25 to 41 p.m.p.g.; buses 125 p.m.p.g.. An electric train even at 75% load factor gets a much higher fuel efficient rate than buses (175 plus). Energy intensiveness for road freight is about 3.5 times that for rail under full capacity loading. Freight can be hauled more efficiently by rail than road.

On an average high speed trains operate at 1.5 to 3 times the energy efficiency of the car per passenger mile and 4 times more efficiently than an air plane.

The Lonie study group in recommending greater use of cars and buses for transport seems to be ignorant of the present world situation of dwindling oil resources and greater dependence on Middle East countries whose unstable political conditions are well known. Greater dependence on liquid fuel for our transport will make us dependent for our transport on oil companies, Arab oil sheiks, and fanatical religious maniacs who control their oil.

The Federal government is rightly calling for fuel conservation and by its oil parity pricing policy, striving to stop the wasteful use of our scarce resources. It is economic treason for Lonie to suggest the increased use of our liquid fuel.

In any future energy or oil crisis, Melbourne will be the most favoured city in the Southern Hemisphere. Our public transport systems use electricity and we have vast brown coal reserves to generate electricity.

On the economic aspects the Lonie reports have gone for the short term cure of cutting down and closing public transport because they are not paying. The cures suggested are more costly.

For quite some time Mr. Maclellan has been focussing public attention on the transport deficit, claiming that rail loses money but roads do not. This distortion is echoed by Lonie.

While huge sums of money are poured into road transport, the railways are starved of funds. Rail trains and stations are old and dirty. Rolling stock and signals are antique; services have been proved by us to be "the worst in the world"; management is not encouraged to be efficient; industrial strife is brought on by confrontation and staff morale is non-existent. How can the railways make money under these handicaps!

Car or bus travel instead of trains will have the following aspects of cost, inconvenience etc..

A bus carries 45 passengers and has an economic life of 10 years. A rail coach carries over 60 passengers and has a life of 30 years. In Victoria they are used for 70 and more years!

The number of passengers travelling each week between the city and some country towns is shown below:

Castlemaine	5,200
Bendigo	3,800
Traralgon	3,500
Maryborough	2,500
Shepparton	2,100
Colac	1,900
Echuca	1,800
Mildura	1,600
Warrnambool	1,000

Imagine the number of buses, trips and petrol that will be needed to carry these passengers, the congestion on the roads, the pollution, road accidents, and damage to the roads. To this picture add the number of trucks that will be needed to carry the freight that will follow from the deregulation of freight restrictions and closure of country rail centres.

Over 33.8% of all trips for work purposes and 17.5% for non-work purposes in the total Melbourne statistical division are done by public transport. Some 260,000 passengers pass through Flinders and Spencer Street stations daily. Imagine the chaos if all of them came into the city by cars.

Experience in the U.S.A. shows that where country rail services were replaced with buses the residents turned to their own cars for their transport needs because bus schedules and routes were unsuitable and bus travel was uncomfortable and crowded.

Some of the economic aspects of the greater use of cars and buses for transport are: depletion of our scarce fuel resources; environmental pollution; more road accidents and deaths; higher insurance premiums; demand for more roads follows increased road usage and increased usage results in need for more road repairs and maintenance: all of which mean more costs to the taxpayer.

The Transport Minister makes much of the rail deficit and the burden it places on taxpayers, especially on the non-users.

In no Western democratic country do the railways run at a profit. The average cost recovery rate, recorded by 63 urban passenger undertakings which are members of the International Union of Public Transport, was 55% in 1976.

VicRail's figure of 51% in 1979/80 was quite an achievement when we consider the obsolete rolling stock, old equipment and inefficient management.

No figures are available for the return or the actual costs of roads. In 1977/78, the last year for which a breakdown for road costs is available, the road costs were \$756.921 million and the return was \$85.750 million, leaving a deficit of \$671.171 million!

Public transport costs are visible but road costs are hidden. To the costs of construction and maintenance of roads must be added the costs of the ROSTA budget, the EPA budget, Police and support services such as ambulance and hospitals for the road accidents, the costs of Local governments on roads, the social costs of loss of life and limb, the emotional drain from the road accidents, and the loss of man hours and production of those killed and maimed each year.

All these costs are five times more than the transport subsidies paid by taxpayers, but we do not hear the Transport Minister claiming that they are a burden on the taxpayer. Transport is a community service just like Education, Health, etc.. The user pays principle is inappropriate. Better and more efficient services will reduce the burden on the taxpayer but the Minister is not interested in providing such services.

When we got VicRail the first of what we hope will be many more entries in the Guinness Records Books for the world's worst record on train unpunctuality, the Minister promoted every top official responsible for that record.

Andrews and Lacey in their recent EFFE Report (1980) prove that a shift from rail to road for intrastate freight in Victoria would lead to a net economic loss to the community, while a shift from road to rail would lead to a net economic gain.

Closure of rail services in the country will reduce flourishing towns to ghost towns, throw thousands out of jobs and reverse the decentralisation policy of encouraging people to live in satellite towns. More people will be forced to move to areas serviced by public transport, thereby inflating real estate prices in these areas while sending prices plummeting to rock bottom in the areas away from which they will be moving.

This will have disastrous economic effects on the building and allied industries.

In the 1950's the oil and tyre companies in the U.S.A. forced the closure of many rail lines and replacement with buses. Today billions of dollars are being spent to rebuild those lines. Taxpayers in Victoria can be saved this economic disaster by learning a lesson from the U.S.A..

In terms of safety trains carry passengers in greater safety than any form of transport. In Japan for example, the famous 'Shinkasen Bullet' trains since 1964 have carried 1500 million passengers at 130 m.p.h. in comfort, without a single passenger fatality. In the same period, over 800,000 Americans have died in road accidents!

In Victoria an average of 800 people annually are killed in road accidents, while there have been no major rail accidents for over 5 years.

Evidence in foreign countries shows that rail travel is 20 to 30 times safer than road and air travel.

The total cost to the community of these road deaths and accidents is estimated at \$430 million each year according to a study by John Paterson (Urban Systems Pty. Ltd) 1973.

These costs cover the net economic contributions of those killed i.e. expected value of their future production. For those injured, short term loss of earnings, production, medical costs are computed. The social aspects of bereavement to family members, dislocation of family life through loss of either parent etc. cannot be computed in monetary terms.

For Defence and Emergency purposes the need for a rail system cannot be over-emphasised, for in such situations quick movements of people and freight and conservation of fuel for tanks and aeroplanes for our defence will assume paramount importance. Retention of our electrically operated rail and tram services will assure that fuel can be conserved for these more urgent purposes. To close down, for example, the Port Melbourne line to the docks will be a suicidal and treasonable act in a military sense - yet Lonie recommends it.

Every major city and country is modernising and improving its rail services as a safeguard against the day when fuel supplies run out or become too costly.

High speed trains on the electrified lines between London, Liverpool and Manchester in the U.K. have increased patronage by over 60%. In Japan the famous high speed trains between Tokyo and Osaka carry over 350,000 daily.

High speed Metroliners between New York and Washington carry 60% more passengers than in 1971. Patronage on the Amtrack trains throughout the U.S.A. has increased substantially.

The "GO TRANSIT" commuter trains in Toronto are carrying 20% more passengers than in 1970.

VicRail today is carrying 37% less passengers than in 1970 simply because of the government's policy of running down the system and providing inefficient, unreliable, irregular, unpunctual and badly managed services!

The task before us is not about distorted deficits and short term economic solutions without any context to their long term social and economic costs.

The decision is about moving people in the best transport modes or combination of modes which will produce the most cost efficient, fuel efficient and best social effects for the entire community.

Trains use less land and fuel while producing less air, water and noise pollution than cars and buses. Their presence in the environment is the least intrusive of all forms of industrial activity.

Economic aspects, defence, energy conservation, safety, environmental and social costs all show the advantages of our electrically operated public transport over road and car transport.

The need of the hour is to see how best and soon our rail and tram systems can be modernised and improved.

An American author William Buckley, once wrote:

"If no one had invented the railway and suddenly one were to call a press conference and divulge the idea of a track running in a straight line between two cities, on which an enormous engine, an adaptation of an automobile, could pull enormous buses at speeds of a hundred miles an hour - the whole country would stop in amazement. Every politician would rise up in chorus to appropriate money to make the dream come true!"

Sadly, in Victoria we have this dream but government actions and public apathy are killing the dream by slowly destroying our trains.

Will posterity label us as the destroyers of the State's economy, its prosperity and future by allowing Lonie and Maclellan to get away with the destruction of our public transport?

Ken McIntyre,
Hon. Secretary.

RAIL CLOSURES A BETRAYAL OF ELECTION MANDATE

We now know that the Government has made the following decisions affecting metropolitan rail services. The Lilydale-Healesville line has already been closed, with the Upfield, Port Melbourne, and Mornington Peninsula lines and Newport to Altona and Williamstown branches to be closed soon. Services will be reduced on the Sandringham and Camberwell to Alamein lines. All these cuts in services are as recommended in the Lonie Reports.

Closure of these rail services is a betrayal by the Hamer Government of its election mandate. Since coming to office in 1969 and at each State election since, Mr. Hamer has promised and been elected to office because he said it was his Government's policy to provide Victorians "a fast, safe, reliable, regular, comfortable, cheap, adequate rail service".

The reasons given for the closure of these lines, for example the Healesville line, is a lesson in hypocrisy and irresponsibility. The Government has for over 30 years failed to provide adequate funds for maintaining, repairing and modernising the rail services, and as a result they have deteriorated into a sub-standard, inefficient and the world's worst system for unpunctuality. The Hamer Government now uses this run-down, dilapidated condition as the reason for closing down the services!

The double irresponsibility is that Healesville, which is a picturesque holiday and tourist resort, will now decline with the lack of public transport services. -- And Mr. Hamer is the Tourist Minister also! This makes it a double betrayal of a mandate!

Ken McIntyre,
Secretary.

Application for
TTA Membership

and/or

Offer of Assistance

(P.T.O.)

To: The Secretary,
Train Travellers' Association,
61 Leila Road,
Ormond 3163

(appropriate items)

Please enrol me as a member of the
Train Travellers' Association.

- () Regular Member \$ 3
- () Donor Member \$ 10
- () Corporate Member \$ 50

I would like to make a donation
towards the TTA's campaign.

() Donation \$

() I would like to assist with TTA activities
(leaflet distribution, local meetings, etc.).
Please contact me on the telephone number(s)
given below:

Home:

Work:

Name:

Address:

.....

..... Post Code:

TTA Membership and Newsletter

The TTA Newsletter is published by and for members of the Train Travellers' Association.

The TTA is a voluntary, non-party political, non-profit organisation of train travellers and public transport users.

Its function is to lobby the government for a modern, adequate, efficient rail and public transport system. Our plan for improved public transport calls for optimum use of trains, trams and buses in the interests of saving our scarce fuel resources, protection of the environment and incorporating the advantages of the various modes of transport in the most cost efficient and energy efficient manner.

TTA membership is open to any Victorian who uses or is interested in public transport. Membership includes quarterly issues of the TTA Newsletter for the basic subscription of \$3 annually. Those who can afford to are requested to become Donor members at \$10 per year or to make donations towards the costs of printing, postage, hire of halls for meetings, etc. All members have equal status and their category of membership may be changed, if they wish, when subscriptions are renewed.

Regular TTA activities consist of monthly meetings of the TTA Council to which all members are invited. The Council meets on the first Wednesday of each month (except January) in the Masonic Club, 6th Floor, 164 Flinders Street, Melbourne at 5:30 p.m. (Please sign the Visitors' Book at Ground Floor reception.)

Other TTA functions are the preparation of briefs and submissions; liaison with VicRail managers through regular meetings; representations to the Premier and the Transport Minister on suggestions, complaints, etc.; press and media interviews; speeches at public meetings; articles and letters to the press; publishing and distribution of leaflets; etc.

Members are encouraged to contribute articles to the Newsletter and offer suggestions and ideas to the Council.

TTA office bearers elected for the year 1980/81 are:-

Home Telephone No.

President: Dr. Charles Sowerwine

Secretary: Ken McIntyre

Vice-President: John Alexopoulos

Treasurer: David Bowd

Publicity Officer: Patrick O'Connor

Council Members:

Dr. Douglas Sherman

Miss Lynne Thompson

Pat Minihan

Barry Gray

Steve Howard

Alex Boyne

Robin Vowels

TOWARDS A BETTER PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM

The Train Travellers' Association Plan:

- . Modernised trains to attract more passengers.
- . Tax deductions for fares to travel to work.
- . Replacement of Motor Registration and 3rd Party insurance with increased petrol tax to pay for road use. This would bring perceived cost of road transport into line with real social cost.
- . Limits on urban freeways, especially if they duplicate public transport routes.
- . Staggered working hours.
- . An inter-modal ticket to cover travel by train, tram, or bus in various zones.
- . Better country freight and passenger services.
- . A freeze on the closure of country rail routes.
- . Modern diesel rail cars and convenient time tables for country services.
- . If buses are to replace trains in country areas, they should be VicRail owned.
- . Fairer competition between rail and road transport through:
 - a road freight tax to pay for road usage
 - the State taking over rail maintenance and development as it does for roads.
- . Co-ordinated transport authorities and services.
- . The re-organization of the Railway Board with full-time Board members having responsibilities for specific departments and representation for passengers, on the Board.
- . A new cost accounting system to make clear the real costs of different transport systems.
- . Zoning policies that encourage home building and cluster housing close to existing public transport.

Emergency Appeal Success

Thanks to all members who responded to our emergency appeal for funds, with individual contributions of up to \$50; a total of \$421 was raised to the end of November.

In addition, a total of \$447.95 in cash was donated by members and supporters at the Assembly Hall meeting on the 16th November, 1980.

These funds together with contributions from kindred associations will just cover the cost of arranging that meeting which was about \$1000, mainly for printing the 75000 copies of the leaflet advertising the meeting.

Many members have joined or renewed their subscriptions as Donor Members (\$10 each) and we now have a few Corporate Members (\$50 each). These have considerably strengthened the Association's financial position.

However, in 1981 the Association will need even more money and activity by members if our aim of stopping cuts in rail services and achieving improvements is to be advanced.

If you were thinking of making a donation to the Emergency Appeal, but haven't got around to it yet, it is not too late to make a contribution, which will be most welcome.