

--- Keeping the wheels rolling

AMERICA'S WAR TRANSPORTATION

In times of peace, America's transportation problems have been of staggering proportions. War has doubled the load!

To win the war is the job of every American. To keep the raw materials and the parts moving to the factories ... to keep the troops and munitions moving to the front -- that, too, is the responsibility of every American.

That is the message to be conveyed to the American public by motion pictures.

Motion pictures can capture the thrilling drama of wartime transportation. More, they can show each man, woman and child how he personally is involved in the task of keeping the wheels rolling.

Civilian needs cut into war needs. That means civilian needs must be held to a minimum. War workers must get to their jobs. Common carriers cannot handle the load. That means we must keep our 29 million privately-owned motor cars on the road. Millions of troops must be moved to camps and to embarkation points. That means non-essential civilian travel must be eliminated.

These facts should be stressed, at every opportunity, by motion pictures, whose job it is to make every American recognize that this is his war, that he suffers by indifference or selfishness.

The accompanying fact sheet will supply you with a comprehensive idea of what the transportation problems are, why they affect every civilian, and how motion pictures can help to solve them.

Office of War Information

OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION
BUREAU OF MOTION PICTURES
HOLLYWOOD OFFICE

NOTE: The following information is being sent to you as a supplement to the War Information Manual. Its purpose is to give further amplification to the Government's war program, and to provide material for short subjects and feature pictures. If more detailed information on the subject is desired, it will be furnished to you, on request, by the Office of War Information. Should you wish to use this material in your short subject or feature program, kindly communicate with this office in order to avoid unnecessary duplication.

AMERICA'S WAR TRANSPORTATION

THE PROBLEM: ENLISTING THE AID OF EVERY AMERICAN TO KEEP THE WHEELS ROLLING.

America's war of production is being fought on a hundred thousand fronts, from Pittsburgh to Dallas, from Seattle to Jersey City. Every one of them has to be supplied - with materials and men in quantities such as America has never known. All of them must be kept in contact with each other and with war agencies via communication systems.

That is the titanic job of America's railroads, trucks, planes, ships, barges, pipelines, powerlines, passenger cars, streetcars, subways and buses.

The revolution that has taken place in our complex transportation system since the war is a story that needs to be told -- and can only be told effectively by the screen. It is a story of movement, of speed and more speed, of overcoming tremendous obstacles, of utilizing everything on wheels, everything that moves under power.

Wartime transportation problems involve every American, not only because this is his war, but also because his everyday needs must be supplied by the same facilities that keep our mines, mills, factories, farms and shipyards in operation ... that put weapons and food into the hands of our troops and our allies, wherever they may be.

Motion pictures, speaking directly to the individual, can make it clearly evident that because of the ever-growing burden on transportation and communication facilities, civilian needs must be curtailed to the minimum. Every civilian must realize it is his responsibility to keep the wheels turning, the lines open, the men and supplies moving. That is the real meaning behind the story of war transportation. That is the message which the screen can -- and should -- convey.

RAILROADS AT WAR

Since the turn of the century, our nation has had the finest network of railroads in the world. Today we are more than thankful for their superiority. In 1941, rail traffic clicked off 475 billion ton-miles. But 1942 will surpass 1941 by a startling margin -- probably reaching 600 billion ton-miles.

Consider oil as an example of the many commodities railroads are now hauling in unprecedented quantities. November 1941 -- a few weeks before Pearl Harbor -- found railroads transporting about 68,000 barrels each day. Now, with the decline of tanker service, the figure has risen to more than 800,000 barrels daily.

Aside from the vast increase in production and the consequent necessity for greater speed and efficiency on the part of railroads, the war has brought a host of new problems to complicate the transportation picture. These are some of the more troublesome "transportation pains":

1. Shortage of critical materials, especially steel and rubber, curtailing replacements of old equipment, even though there are one-third fewer cars today than the rail industry had available in 1929.
2. Shortage of labor, requiring longer hours and the employment of more women and unskilled workers.
3. Diversion of coastwise shipping to trans-ocean traffic, increasing the burden on railroads.
4. More subcontracting, requiring transportation between each stage of production.
5. Insufficient storage space, necessitating rapid trans-shipment of every kind of freight.
6. Changes in normal trends of traffic, resulting in freight congestion in war production areas.
7. Movement of munitions and millions of troops under rush orders.
8. Increased civilian traffic by railroad as the result of gas rationing.

How is railway transportation coordinated?

The job of integrating and keeping in operation our millions of freight and passenger carriers (including trucks, common carriers and

privately-owned automobiles) is the responsibility of the Office of Defense Transportation.

In order to detect potential freight bottlenecks and to apply preventive measures in advance, ODT devised a nation-wide "traffic channels plan" for railroads. The United States was divided into three channels of east-west freight haul, and 7 channels of north-south flow. The lines drawn on the map divide the country into 21 zones.

From each channel and zone, embracing all the 121 major railroads, daily reports are received in Washington. These reports show in detail the number of cars moving into and out of each terminal, the number of cars loaded on any individual line, those received from connecting lines, and those delivered to connecting lines. The figures are broken down into loaded cars and empties. Also shown is the number of cars "on hand" or held over.

These figures are converted into an over-all "train sheet", showing the daily movement of all cars, loaded and empty. When reports indicate a potential bottleneck, ODT immediately notifies the railroad or railroads concerned and, through cooperative measures, freight is diverted around the potential danger point until all signs of a bottleneck have disappeared.

ODT is likewise informed daily as to the volume of freight movement into port cities, and also as to the contents of each car. In cooperation with the Army, Navy and other war officials, ODT issues permits to shippers before any freight for export to war zones can move into a port area. Under this port-control system, danger of serious congestion is minimized.

What do all these railroad problems mean in terms of the individual?

Clearly, that railroads have more than enough to handle in this staggering picture of transportation. That every mile of needless passenger travel, every pound of non-essential freight, subtracts from America's war effort.

FREIGHTERS OF THE HIGHWAY

The pattern of American transportation is incomplete without trucks. They go everywhere, including innumerable places that railroads never penetrate. The truck, traveling by daylight and by headlight, is an integral part of both the nation's industrial and farm life.

Last year there were some five million trucks in the U.S. In the broad panorama of war production, trucks link separate factories together into a continuous assembly line. Trucks bring war goods to embarkation points; they make local deliveries of necessary consumer goods; they rush needed parts to war plants; they carry high octane gasoline to military air fields.

This constant grind brings wear. But when today's trucks are gone, there will be no general replacements. Such replacements would withdraw precious raw materials and manpower from the production of weapons.

Every American who owns a truck, drives a truck, or makes any demands whatsoever on trucking facilities shares the responsibility of keeping the nation's trucks rolling for the duration.

PRIVATE AUTOMOBILES

The automobile is the biggest factor in the goings and comings of the American people. A vast share of our existence has been built around the ability of the automobile to span distances with swiftness and ease. The growth of our cities and their sprawling suburbs is postulated upon the presence of the family auto to carry workers to work and shoppers to shops and school children to school. Buses, streetcars and subways perform some of this work, but the overwhelming majority of our nation's personal transportation depends upon the automobile.

There are approximately 29 million private automobiles in the United States. It is estimated that three-fourths of all auto trips are for necessary purposes. It is estimated, too, that between 75% and 100% of all war workers -- depending on the locality -- are dependent upon private automobiles to carry them to and from work every day.

America must keep rolling to work with the automobiles it already has, for they are now irreplaceable. Experts say that we must keep 20 million passenger cars in service if national economy is to function without serious disruption. They must be used sparingly, intelligently, and only on unavoidable trips. For years, perhaps.

Hence the government has instituted gasoline rationing -- both to prolong the life of every car and to conserve rubber.

"BUT I CAN ALWAYS TAKE A BUS OR STREETCAR"

This is the pipe dream in which millions of Americans indulge. In America we've always had things to fall back on. There was no limit to

American ingenuity, which could always find a way to solve problems.

But this is one problem which extends even beyond the realm of American ingenuity.

If every bus and every streetcar in the nation were loaded to capacity every morning and every evening, they still could not accomodate a fraction of the necessary travel that America's 62,000,000 workers will require during 1943.

Today every type of common carrier serves for only 14% of the total travel miles covered by Americans. By no wizardry can these common carriers take on nearly seven times the load they are carrying today.

That's the picture. Either we take care of our cars or the nation's transportation system is paralyzed.

The man who can't get to his job, doesn't have a job. The more men who can't get to their jobs, the fewer guns, planes, tanks and ships we'll make. The fewer guns, planes, tanks and ships we make, the more battles we lose. And if we lose enough battles, we lose the war.

WHAT'S EXPECTED OF THE PUBLIC

Conservation begins with the individual. The railroads, the bus and trolley lines, the trucking companies know what we are up against. They've accepted willingly certain government-imposed restrictions on their services. They recognize that their continued livelihood and the extent of their contribution to the war effort hinge upon conservation.

But the public is not yet fully awake to its responsibility. After a year of war we still see

..... the man with the private automobile and the penchant to go Sunday driving.

..... the optimist who thinks he can always "take a bus or trolley" when his car wears out.

..... the housewife who fumes because the grocer can't send his truck out right away with a quarter-pound of butter.

..... the woman who complains because the bus service isn't what it used to be.

..... the people who demand non-essential goods with no regard for the needs of war production.

..... the people who ride to work every morning in the splendid isolation of an empty car.

..... the driver who slides up to a traffic light like a runner stealing second base.

..... the people who chisel on gasoline rationing and think they're being clever.

..... the rail and bus travellers who go places simply because they like to be out and around.

..... the people who clutter telephone and telegraph lines with needless conversations.

These are all part of the great throng which motion pictures must enlighten. These are the ones who must realize that their petulant or complacent attitudes are as dangerous to America's security as an invasion fleet off our coasts.

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Here are the measures which the government expects the people to understand and support:

1. Essential driving.

Keeping our personal transportation habits down to the essential minimum is not just a matter of patriotism. It's plain common sense. Every unnecessary mile an automobile is driven means one less essential mile it can travel.

"Essential driving" means just that. It means driving from home to work and back, carrying as many other persons as possible on a planned day-by-day basis. It means only the driving on which one's job and the basic welfare of one's family depends.

2. Car-sharing.

This is the surest way to keep America's private automobiles rolling for purposes of essential transportation. Four or more workers, each of whom once drove his own car, should now rotate use of their cars so that the daily wear is evenly distributed.

Group riding is not a "hitch-hike" affair. It must be organized. All patriotic communities, industries, stores, office buildings and even neighborhoods are inaugurating car-sharing groups so that workers and shoppers can get together and pool their individual cars.

Local car-sharing campaigns should place considerable stress on the need for staggered work hours and improved traffic planning, which will eliminate much of the morning and evening rush-hour traffic, alleviate traffic tie-ups, and make group-riding an even more economical process.

3. Care and operation of cars.

The wear on any automobile -- of both its mechanical parts and its tires -- can be greatly minimized by careful driving habits and frequent check-ups.

Speed must not exceed 35 miles an hour. Wear increases tremendously beyond that point. Gasoline consumption rises. Friction is greater through all the moving parts.

Automobiles must be in good mechanical condition, should be taken immediately to a competent mechanic if any part of the car is not functioning properly. Wheels must be properly aligned to prevent

unnecessary wear and tear on tires. Owners whose tires show signs of careless driving and unnecessary wear will not be eligible to apply for recaps or replacements.

4. Motor truck conservation.

Owners of commercial vehicles -- and all citizens who have need for their services -- share the responsibility of keeping these vehicles in operation. The breakdown of an automobile may affect only the wartime life and livelihood of a single owner. But commercial vehicles supply fundamental goods and services to millions.

All trucks must be driven sparingly, must carry full loads, must be driven carefully and must be kept in the best possible running order.

5. Curtailment of consumer buying.

A recent order by the ODP instructs virtually all owners of delivery trucks to cut their mileage by at least 25%. This means fewer delivery trips, more fully loaded trucks, consolidation of routes, no special trips.

Many a housewife finds these curtailments bothersome. Many cannot see why they must put up with such inconveniences. They berate the grocer, the butcher and the milkman. They threaten department stores and tradespeople with loss of business if service falls below the standards they knew and expected in peacetime.

One of the biggest problems in making the general curtailment of consumer deliveries successful is getting people to understand and accept cheerfully these new limitations. Consumers must be made to think before buying, must buy only what they actually need, must conserve what they have and make it last, must avoid waste of every kind. They should be encouraged to shop less frequently and to carry their own parcels whenever it is possible.

Unnecessary buying means a greater demand on production and transportation facilities. It means that fewer war materials will reach our troops and our allies. Some of the burden on transportation will be relieved if consumers form the habit of buying locally-produced goods and foods. Patriotic Americans will exercise frugality, forethought and self-discipline as their share in the job of keeping the men and supplies moving to the front.

6. Less rail and bus travel.

Pleasure trips must be deferred until after the war. Railroads

and bus lines are critically short of passenger carrying equipment, while travel on inter-city trains and buses this year is at least 50% greater than last, and continues to grow.

Although every available train and bus is needed for the transportation of troops and of civilians engaged in war activity, a recent survey for ODF shows that 40% of all inter-city rail and bus travel is non-essential. Conventions, meetings, group tours, week-end excursions, family reunions, etc., should be postponed for the duration.

When travelling must be done, the civilian should remember these rules. First, travel in the middle of the week, when traffic is lightest. Second, make reservations well in advance. Third, carry as little baggage as possible.

7. Communication facilities.

As with transportation, the war effort has first demand on the avenues of communication, which must be kept open for urgent military and production needs. When lines of communication are clogged, it sometimes means as serious a threat to our security as delay in the shipment of goods and the transportation of troops.

The use of communication facilities by civilians should be governed by these self-imposed rules: Don't send telegrams or use the telephone (especially for long distance calls) except when it is absolutely necessary, then do your 'phoning and telegraphing during slack hours. Allow plenty of time for the delivery of mail and parcels, especially during holiday seasons.

8. Public patience and cooperation.

All but essential forms of transportation have been discontinued. Local bus and streetcar routes have been changed, often making schedules and stops less frequent. Delivery services have been combined and curtailed to some extent.

All this has been done with one aim -- to save wear on existing transportation equipment and to conserve essential materials for use in war production. It imposes minor hardships on a public which has been accustomed to fast, comfortable and convenient service.

But people who complain at the sudden appearance of inconveniences - who complain because there isn't a bus every ten minutes or because they have to stand up when they sat before -- reveal a selfish indifference to America's fight for security. Discomfort, inconvenience and eternal vigilance in all things are the small sacrifices we all must make for victory. They are as nothing compared to the war burdens of our allies and the incalculable sacrifices being made without complaint by our fighting men on every front.

HOW CAN MOTION PICTURES HELP?

In numerous ways motion pictures can convey to the American public a realization of the gravity and complexity of our transportation problem:

First, through feature pictures about various dramatic phases of wartime transportation -- that is, through stories set against a background of the wartime railroading, trucking and shipping.

Second, through short subjects of an informative nature which will present the facts of the transportation problem to the public.

Third, by including references, hints, information and reminders in the dialogue, plot situation and scenes of every picture dealing with the war. Characters should be shown as aware of their responsibility to the war effort, aware of the necessity of keeping the wheels turning. They should be shown making these small sacrifices:

- ...driving only when necessary; walking whenever possible.
- ...sharing cars and taxis; never driving alone.
- ...spending more time at home.
- ...abiding cheerfully by gas rationing restrictions.
- ...having tires and motors checked; driving carefully and slowly.
- ...buying only what is needed; asking for local products.
- ...carrying their own packages.
- ...foregoing pleasure trips by train, bus and plane.
- ...demonstrating patience, co-operation and good sportsmanship in hundreds of other ways.

Movie-goers identify themselves with the characters they see on the screen. If those characters are shown identifying themselves with the war effort, the message will get across. It must get across if we are to keep the wheels of America turning.
