



HAVE YOU THE TAXPAYER BEEN RAILROADED?

POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS OF RAIL

- Rail is sustainable.
- Rail is far safer than road.
- London's rail commuters could get there no other way.
- Rail is environmentally kind - using far less fuel than road transport.
- Rail beats road for speed every time.
- Rail generates development.

BUT CONSIDER THE FACTS

Sustainable at a cost.

- Current subsidies to national rail are the equivalent to every household in the UK paying between £2,000 and £4,000 in taxes over the current decade. For most people a rail journey is a rarity, half of us use rail less than once a year.
- The London to Birmingham return rail fare has the range £20 - £44. Add to that subsidy, which has the range 20 to 40 pence per passenger mile, and get £64 to £132 for the 220 mile round trip. Compare that with the fares by express coach which, if booked online and in advance, may be as low as £3.
- Every lane-mile of the motorway and trunk road system pays the Exchequer at least £320,000 pa.
- Every track-mile of Network Rail extracts at least £240,000 pa from the exchequer.
- Track maintenance for rail costs nine times as much as for buses and lorries.
- The annual cost of capital plus maintenance for a seat in a railway carriage is three times that for express coaches.
- During the miners' strike, freight to power stations was found to be 20 - 25 % cheaper by road than by rail.

Rail Safety

- Deaths of rail passengers per passenger-mile are double those suffered by express coach passengers.
- The network-wide deaths per passenger-mile by rail, including trespassers, but not suicides, are more than double those on the motorway network.

London's Rail Commuters

- Victoria Main Line London receives 30,000 crushed passengers over four tracks in the peak hour or 7,500 passengers/hour/track. In contrast the single express coach lane that serves the New York bus station delivers 30,000 seats in the peak hour - more than four times as many as rail achieves per track at Victoria.

The Environment

- Express coaches and lorries could discharge the national rail function using 20-25% less fuel than required by rail.

Speed

- The average passenger's rail journey is only 25 miles. 90% are less than 80 miles. For nearly all of those the express coach would beat the train for speed - offering a more frequent service at a fraction of the rail fare.

Generating development or dereliction?

Far from attracting development, most rail stations are places of dreams often with endless acres of near derelict sidings. In contrast development goes where there is good road access.

WHAT DO WE CONCLUDE?

- There are overwhelming financial and environmental benefits to be had from converting underused railway lines into roads for coaches and goods vehicles.

- The cost of converting underutilised rail routes would be a fraction of the current costs of modernisation. This relatively small cost would also be partly offset by realising the development potential of derelict railway land that lays idle in the hearts of our towns and cities for the want of good road access.

- If London's rail commuters want seats at one quarter of the current cost, without the crushed conditions they currently endure, then swap the trains for express coaches. At peak times these coaches would fill only one quarter of the network space available - leaving space for commercial vehicles currently using unsuitable city streets.

COMMENT

- If the Government wishes to subsidise some deserving would-be travellers why not give them the money and let them make the transport choice?

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

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