

ORIGINAL

Decision No. 61511

BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Investigation on the Commission's own motion into the operations and adequacy of service of SOUTHERN PACIFIC COMPANY on that portion of the Shasta Route within the County of Siskiyou.

Case No. 6568

- John MacDonald Smith, for Southern Pacific Company, respondent.
- Randolph Collier, as an individual and as a State Senator, for certain of his constituents, interested parties.
- W. A. Barr, as an individual and as a member of the Board of Supervisors of Siskiyou County, interested parties.
- Joe G. Allen, for Butte Valley Farm Center and Siskiyou County Farm Bureau, interested parties.
- K. R. Burns, Legislative Representative, Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, Lodge No. 458, for G. W. Ballard, State Representative, Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, interested party.
- Hugh N. Orr, for the Commission staff.

INTERIM OPINION

On June 28, 1960, the Commission issued its order instituting investigation herein. In this order the Commission stated that on April 8, 1960, the respondent Southern Pacific Company filed with this Commission new timetables to become effective on April 24, 1960, in which the following stops in the County of Siskiyou were eliminated from the schedules of Trains Nos. 19 and 20:

- Macdoel - regular stop
- Mt. Shasta - regular stop
- Bray - flag stop (northbound)
- Mt. Hebron - conditional stop
for mail pickup only.

In the absence of any protests the elimination of said stops did become effective on April 24, 1960. Upon the receipt thereafter of protests from residents of the County of Siskiyou, respondent reinstated as flag stops the two regular stops at Macdoel and Mt. Shasta, effective May 4, 1960.

The Commission instituted its investigation into the operations and adequacy of service of respondent for the following purposes:

1. To determine whether public convenience and necessity justify the reduced train service now in effect in the County of Siskiyou at Macdoel, Mt. Shasta, Bray and Mt. Hebron.
2. Whether any other order or orders that may be appropriate should be entered in the lawful exercise of the Commission's jurisdiction.

Public hearing in this matter was held before Examiner Wilson E. Cline at Redding on November 10, 1960. The matter was taken under submission at the close of the hearing.

Evidence Submitted by Persons and
Representatives of Persons in
Siskiyou County

A member of the Board of Supervisors of Siskiyou County testified that the service of Southern Pacific Company has been deteriorating from year to year for the past twenty years and it has reached a low point to where there is only one train each way having a regular stop in the entire county. Siskiyou County has a population of 32,000 and the majority of these people live in territory contiguous to the Southern Pacific line.

This witness further testified that all the mail that comes in or out of Mt. Shasta is carried by truck from or to Dunsmuir and that the mail is held up and delayed. Baggage and express are juggled about from here to there, and one never knows where the articles are. Although Mt. Shasta is a flag stop, the

other day a passenger who wanted to catch the train had to flag it down himself.

The representative for the Butte Valley Farm Center and the Siskiyou County Farm Bureau testified that the persons he was representing are not protesting the passenger service but stated that they are protesting the change in the mail service.

He stated that prior to the change in scheduled train stops the mail was picked up from the railroad stations by people within each community and delivered to the local post office and that the outgoing mail was taken from the post office to the local railroad station. Now there is a mail truck which starts at Bray early in the morning, picks up the outgoing mail along a route of twenty to twenty-five miles and delivers it at Dorris about 3 o'clock in the morning. The same truck picks up the incoming mail at Dorris and delivers it back along the route. About eleven miles of the route is over State highway and the balance is over back country roads. During the winter months, because of snow, road conditions, and sometimes the lateness of the trains, the mail will not be delivered on the day that it should be.

The State Senator from Del Norte and Siskiyou Counties introduced into evidence a letter dated June 24, 1960, from Verne Scoggins, Regional Operations Director, San Francisco Regional Office, Post Office Department, which reads as follows:

"Inquiries made as a result of your letter of June 3, 1960 concerning mail service at Macdoel, California, indicate that Southern Pacific trains 19 and 20 only stop at that point if and when passengers are due to entrain or detrain.

"Representatives of the Southern Pacific Company advise that during the period from May 11 to June 14, no stops were made due to lack of passengers. The Postmaster at Macdoel has confirmed that the stops are only made on an intermittent basis.

"It is our understanding that the order from the Public Utilities Commission does not require the company to stop unless passengers are available. Under such conditions, it is not practicable for the Post Office Department to key the dispatch and receipt of mails for Macdoel on the basis of the train regularly stopping at that point.

"If subsequent action by the Public Utilities Commission or the company regularly schedules the stop at Macdoel, the Post Office Department will then authorize the exchange of mails from trains 19 and 20 at that point."

The Senator then introduced petitions signed by 18 residents of Macdoel and one resident of Mt. Hebron which read as follows:

"I protest the curtailment of train service on trains 19 and 20 at Macdoel and Mt. Hebron, California, that started with day light saving time.

"The railroad is our only sure means of travel from Butte Valley during the severe winter months. Also the curtailment deprives our valley of satisfactory mail service and denies us express service."

This witness also introduced into evidence a statement signed by the Secretary of the Board of Directors of Butte Valley Irrigation District protesting the new mail service and requesting that the trains stop at Macdoel and Mt. Hebron for direct pickup and delivery of mail. He also introduced into evidence petitions signed by 109 residents of Butte Valley, Siskiyou County, California, which read as follows:

"We, the undersigned residents of Butte Valley, Siskiyou County, California, and receivers of mail in Macdoel and Mt. Hebron, California, do hereby petition the California Public Utilities Commission to restore the former means of mail service, and have the trains stop in Macdoel and Mt. Hebron for direct pickup and delivery of mail."

The Chairman of the Butte Valley Farm Center testified that in order to get mail delivered to the trains it is now necessary to deposit the mail at the post office the previous evening. Formerly such mail could be deposited at the post office the morning

of the departure of the trains. In view of the growth in Butte Valley he protested the reduction in service.

A farmer from Butte Valley testified that reinstatement of the former stop at Macdoel would do a great deal to alleviate the present difficulty with the mails.

Evidence Submitted by Union Representative

The Legislative Representative of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen testified that the schedules of Trains Nos. 19 and 20 provide for dead time of thirty to thirty-five minutes at Dunsmuir and Klamath Falls.

Evidence Submitted by Respondent

An assistant to the Vice President in charge of System Passenger Traffic of Southern Pacific Company testified that Trains Nos. 19 and 20 are primarily headend trains which principally carry mail and express and baggage. Headend traffic accounts for 97 percent of the revenue earned by these trains, whereas only 3% of the revenue is derived from passenger traffic. Prior to the changes in schedules which were made in April, Trains Nos. 19 and 20 were marginal operations, i.e., revenues just about matched out-of-pocket costs.

This witness testified that the changes in the schedules of Trains Nos. 19 and 20 were made after conferences with representatives of the U. S. Post Office Department. The Post Office officials desired a later departure of Train No. 20 from Oakland so that more of the late afternoon business mail could be placed on that train. The officials of the Post Office furnished respondent with a list of points which they needed as stops on Trains Nos. 19 and 20. As Macdoel, Bray and Mt. Eebtron were not included on this list they were eliminated as stops in order to go along with the Post Office Department proposal for acceleration of the schedules of Trains Nos. 19 and 20.

At the time the changes in the schedules of these trains were put into effect in April 1960, the respondent received no complaints from members of the public. Subsequently, at the request of this Commission, flag stops for passengers were established at Mt. Shasta and Macdoel.

Exhibit No. 4, which contains a recapitulation of the total revenue passengers entraining and detraining Trains Nos. 19 and 20 during the 143-day period commencing May 11 and ending September 30, 1960, tabulates the number of on and off passengers as follows:

#19						#20					
Dorris		Macdoel		Mt. Shasta		Dorris		Macdoel		Mt. Shasta	
On	Off	On	Off	On	Off	On	Off	On	Off	On	Off
29 ^a	41 ^b	1	20 ^a	136 ^c	4	53 ^d	1	2	0	2	9

- a - Includes 18 school children on trip from Dorris to Macdoel.
- b - Includes 34 school children on trips from Klamath Falls to Dorris.
- c - Includes 114 school children on trips from Mt. Shasta to Dunsuir.
- d - Includes 14 school children on trip from Dorris to Klamath Falls.

If the number of school children who moved only short distances is deleted from the tabulation, during the 143-day period only 34 persons boarded and 13 persons detrained Train No. 19 and only 43 persons boarded and ten detrained Train No. 20.

This witness also submitted the following estimates of population: Mt. Shasta, 1909; Mt. Hebron, 125; Dorris, 1892; Bray, 17; and Macdoel, 125.

Exhibit No. 5 introduced into evidence by respondent is a letter dated November 1, 1960, from the Distribution and Traffic Manager of the San Francisco Regional Office of the Post Office Department to the General Mail, Baggage & Express Traffic Manager of Southern Pacific Company. It reads as follows:

"Your letter of October 31 requests comments on the present schedules of trains 19 and 20 with particular regard to whether or not a return to the former schedule would be desirable.

"The present schedule of train 20, providing a departure from Oakland just before midnight, provides approximately three hours more time for the accumulation of mails to be dispatched to that train than was possible under the former schedule. The arrival time at points en route, although slightly later than under the former schedule, still provides for overnight service within this region. It is recognized that the expedited schedule was made possible by supplemental truck service and now that the schedules are being operated on time, we have found that this service is very satisfactory. To revert to the former schedule would prevent dispatch of a considerable volume of mail accumulating during the busy post office period between 8:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. This would in effect result in a worsening rather than an improvement in service.

"The operation of train 19, which provides for an earlier arrival at Oakland by approximately one hour, has resulted in assurance of some connections at Oakland which were not formerly made.

"In view of the benefits which have resulted from the present schedules, we do not look favorably upon a return to the former schedules."

The witness for respondent testified that since the change in schedules the earnings of Train No. 20 have improved to the extent of about 60 to 70 cents per mile. He further testified that if the officials of the Post Office Department advised respondent that they had decided to revise the mail service in Siskiyou County and now wanted to put the mail off at Macdoel, respondent would make arrangements to stop Trains Nos. 19 and 20 at Macdoel just as quickly as it could get out and post the necessary notices and arrange for the stop. He stated on the record that respondent would cooperate in every way with the Post Office Department should it wish to make any revision in the employment of respondent's train service in handling the mail in and out of Siskiyou County.

The on-time performance of Trains Nos. 19 and 20 has been much better since the schedule changes in May, and it was the opinion of respondent's witness that the on-time performance of these trains would be better this winter than last.

Findings and Conclusions

The Commission having considered the evidence herein, hereby finds and concludes as follows:

1. The United States Post Office Department has stated that it will authorize the exchange of mails from Trains Nos. 19 and 20 at Macdoel, if subsequent action by this Commission schedules a stop at Macdoel.

2. Public convenience and necessity require respondent (a) to reinstate a regularly scheduled daily stop of its Passenger Trains Nos. 19 and 20 at Macdoel and (b) to continue the flag stop at Mt. Shasta, and this Commission should order respondent to schedule such stops until further order of the Commission.

3. A copy of this decision should be served by registered mail upon the San Francisco Regional Office of the Post Office Department.

INTERIM ORDER

A public hearing having been held in the above-entitled matter and the Commission being informed therein, now, therefore,

IT IS ORDERED that:

1. Respondent Southern Pacific Company shall schedule regular daily stops of its Passenger Trains Nos. 19 and 20 at Macdoel, California, until further order of this Commission.

2. Respondent Southern Pacific Company within fifteen days after authorization by the United States Post Office Department of

the exchange of mails at Macdoel shall file a written notice thereof with this Commission.

3. Respondent Southern Pacific Company shall continue the flag stop of Passenger Trains Nos. 19 and 20 at Mt. Shasta until further order of this Commission.

4. This interim order is on a trial basis to provide the United States Post Office Department with the opportunity to authorize the exchange of mails from Trains Nos. 19 and 20 at Macdoel, and is subject to modification after further hearing, if future events warrant such modification.

In addition to the service of copies of this order upon the parties to this proceeding, the Secretary is directed to cause service of this order to be made by registered mail upon the San Francisco Regional Office of the Post Office Department, 79 New Montgomery Street, San Francisco 5, California.

The effective date of this order shall be twenty days after the date hereof.

Dated at San Francisco, California, this 14th day of FEBRUARY, 1961.

Charles W. Page
 President

Walter E. ...

E. ...

George L. ...

Frederick B. Holoboff
 Commissioners