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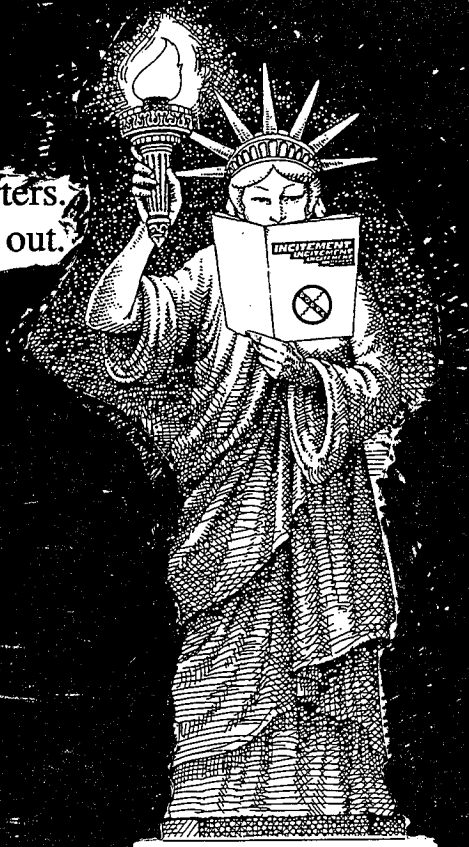
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INCITEMENT INCITEMENT

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Winter 1989

ATLANTA: A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH FOR ADAPT

by Lillibeth Navarro
(contributing -- Stephanie Thomas)

One hundred and seventy-five wheelchairs strong, ADAPT stormed the city of Atlanta in the most powerful push, so far, for total access to transportation. The week long gathering of disabled activists from all over the country and Canada included a protest at the opening of the APTA (American Public Transit Association) convention, a two day protest occupation of the Richard B. Russell Federal Building, and a five hour shut down of the Atlanta Greyhound bus depot. President Bush himself came out in support of the protests, and UMTA officials were blown down from Washington DC to negotiate an agreement that the Administration would do everything within its power to prevent further purchase of buses without lifts before passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA.

Bush's involvement helped generate media coverage across the U.S. and as far away as London and Belfast. DOT Secretary Skinner threw away his prepared speech for the convention and adamantly reconfirmed both President Bush's and his support for the Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA, as passed by the Senate. He also warned APTA its protests would be against the wishes of the White House. UMTA, at a later meeting, has also reconfirmed their commitment to their promises in Atlanta.

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WHEELS OF JUSTICE TO ROLL ON WASHINGTON

ADAPT will be meeting in Washington DC on March 10th through the 17th to call for our right to equality and justice. We will be demanding legislation supporting our rights. Our stand in Washington will help to strengthen the righteousness of our cause. Now is the time you must speak out. If you believe you have a right to equality, join us. Be a part of history, a link in the chain ... what can be more important than this? Together our voices will be heard.

As I write these words our civil rights bill, the Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA, hangs on the balance. Congress has adjourned till January 20th and several House committees including the Transportation Committee still must hold hearings on it. Fred Currey, of Greyhound, and the small business groups are fighting tooth and nail

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Mike Auberger and Bob Iafka were just two among many chained to the Federal Building in Atlanta and calling for justice.

photo: Tom Olin

GOOD OLD SOUTHERN HOSPITALITY

ADAPT's welcome by the Atlanta disability community was invigorating as well! Two luncheons and a party/meeting just up the street from Dr. King's memorial helped set the tone for a week of civil rights work. (Ironically, thought their leadership supports our struggle, both the Ebenizer Baptist Church and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference do not bother to provide access for people who use wheelchairs.) ADAPT's thanks to the Atlanta folks for that famous southern hospitality!!!

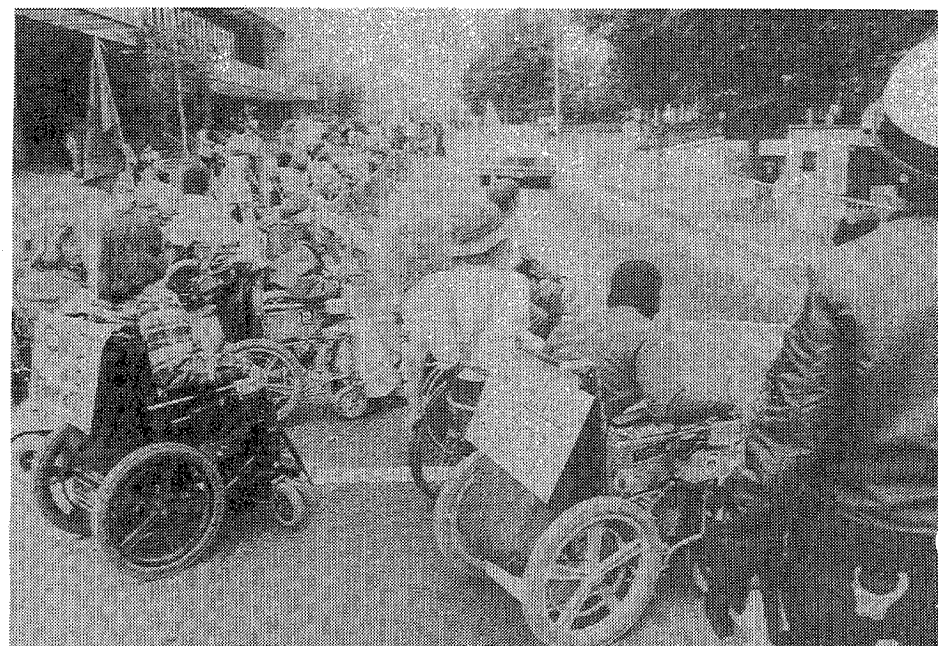
APTA SHOWS ITS TRUE COLORS

Sunday afternoon started with a rally and then a march down Atlanta's main street, Peachtree Ave. to the Hilton Hotel where APTA was meeting. Police barricades surrounded the hotel, and a troop of 50 fresh new recruits were marched out to flex their muscles and stand in formation, looking stern.

Gathering in front of the hotel, ADAPT sent greetings to those inside and demanded to meet with Jack Gilstrap, APTA Executive Vice President. Mr. Gilstrap has in the past fought the recommendations of APTA's own disability access committee supporting accessible transit access. He agreed to meet with three ADAPT delegates outside the hotel but inside the police barricades seperating ADAPT from the hotel. True to form, Gilstrap refused ADAPT's demand for APTA to lend unequivocal support for the ADA, saying instead that APTA would support the ADA only when it was passed by the Congress. ADAPT left the premises without incident, confusing expectations of both APTA and the police.

ADAPT TAKES THE ISSUE TO THE FEDS

The next day, Monday September 26th, DOT Secretary Samuel K. Skinner was to speak before APTA.



300 strong ADAPT surrounded the front of the Hilton to "welcome" APTA to Atlanta.

Judging by his record so far, Skinner hasn't proven to be a friend of disability rights. In Chicago he agreed to accessible transit only after ADAPT won a court order mandating access. As DOT Secretary he has refused to reinterpret the original DOT 504 guidelines to mandate that new buses have lifts. He has sat on the regulations for the Air Carrier Access Act, which should improve access to airplanes, which was Congressionally mandated to be finished with rule making and put into use 120 days after its passage three years ago.

To force a commitment to access from the Department of Transportation, and therefore from APTA, ADAPT decided to take over the Federal Building while Skinner was in town talking to APTA. There were two demands: 1) Sign an executive order saying all new buses bought with federal dollars shall be lift equipped, and 2) implement the regulations for the Air Carriers Access Act.

In the pouring rain, ADAPT moved our troops by Atlanta's accessible rail system to the Richard B. Russell Federal Building. Protesters swarmed through the lobby chanting "We want Skinner" and "Access is a Civil Right!" A group went up to Senator Sam Nunn's office to call Washington about ADAPT's demands to meet with Skinner. At high noon,

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photo: Tom Olin

Wheels of Justice ... continued from p.1

to kill our bill, spreading misinformation and fear to anyone who will listen. Make no mistake... these guys are playing hardball. People are being told they will loose their jobs, their businesses, their life-savings, even their children's safety. And legislators and others are listening.

It is by no means a hopeless case however. So far the House is supporting the Senate version, and just before the adjournment the House Education and Labor Committee unanimously (35 to 0) passed the Senate version of the bill, with no amendments.

Anyone familiar with legislative lobbying can tell you what an impossible task predicting an exact date relating to a bill's travels through the halls of Congress can be. But March 10th will allow us some flexibility in approach. If nothing has happened with the ADA by that time we will be there to re-light the fire under the kettle.

If it is moving along fine we will be there to show our concern and support. If it is being amended to death we will be there to take names and knock heads. If it has passed, it will have been recently, and we will celebrate the fruits of our hard labors and take on other related issues, like the Air Carriers Access Act and the American Bus Association.

To be a part of making the changes in our fate is a beautiful thing. It is your gift to those who cannot be there. It is your gift to the children with disabilities of today and of tomorrow. And it is also your gift to yourself, to know that you helped create a better tomorrow, to know you did not just let the weight of our oppression squeeze the fight out of you. There is liberation simply in speaking out for what is right, and this is may be the best opportunity you ever get.

If we are really a disability rights movement, if we are really seeking equality and independence, what can be more important than spending a few short days howing our commitment and strength? We need you to join us, whether you have been fighting for many, many years or you have never yet spoken out for equality. We need you in DC.

Plan to be there March 10 - 17. If you are flying you should fly into National Airport. Sunday will be a national strategy day, and Monday the actions begin! National ADAPT is making the arrangements so contact Mike or Wade at:
3005 West Gill Place
Denver, CO 80219
303/936-1110

Blessed be the fighters:
The unknown angry man at the end of the idiot stick with his dream of freedom;...

Blessed the agitator; whose touch makes the dead walk;
Blessed the organizer; who discovers the strength of wounds;
Blessed all the fighters.

--Thomas McGrath
Letter to an imaginary friend

"We assume it [the Americans with Disabilities Act] will become law, and if it does we'll implement it. But that doesn't mean we have to be happy about it."

-- Albert Engelken
APTA Deputy Executive Director

SKINNER TRIES TO RETAKE THE HIGH GROUND IN JOHNSTOWN AFTER ATLANTA SMEARING

September 29th, the Cambria County Transit Authority announced it was getting money for six new buses from a \$4.2 million federal transit grant to Pennsylvania. Guess who showed up, apparently on a spur of the moment whim? Yup. It was DOT Secretary Skinner himself, there to congratulate Cambria County which he sites as being one of the most accessible systems in the country. According to Tribune-Democrat reporter Art Heinz, the event's organizers said they cannot remember another appearance here by a member of a presidential cabinet "since the 1977 flood," and transit officials said they had not been formally informed of Skinner's visit.

When asked if the visit was related to the protests in Atlanta, Skinner denied any ties. However he did refer to protesters concerns about last minute attempts to get around the ADA's requirement of full access to public transit. "Most of the buses in this grant, which has been pending for a year, are accessible," Skinner said. "Any that aren't -- I'm going to be calling and writing those people--urging them to make them lift-accessible in anticipation of the legislation."

"Deception is not enough -- the enemy's leaders must be confused; if possible driven insane."

--Mao Tse-Tung

WORKING WITH OUR NON-DISABLED SUPPORTERS

by Diane Coleman

Throughout the disability rights movement, there have been debates concerning the roles of our non-disabled supporters in the long process toward achieving our rights. Such issues have often been raised in connection with ADAPT because of the prominent role of ADAPT's co-founder and tireless worker, Rev. Wade Blank. Although the subject has sometimes been raised destructively rather than constructively, it deserves each of our attention and reflection, especially as ADAPT has come to define the cutting edge of the disability rights movement.

A comparison with the black civil rights movement can be helpful.

DISABLED PEOPLE ARE BI-CULTURAL. One of the first things to notice is that, unlike whites and blacks, non-disabled people usually compose our entire family and the majority of our "support system" from the beginning. We are intimately and necessarily interdependent with non-disabled people. These ties essentially rule out a separatist movement of the nature some blacks sought and, furthermore, may more often make the non-disabled person's commitment to the cause a deeply personal rather than merely abstract emotion. This commitment deserves our full respect.

At the same time, we disabled people need to build our unique disability culture. We need to nurture among ourselves a growing realization that the predominant value system in the non-disabled culture is a value system which oppresses us. It oppresses us by establishing arbitrary criteria for what is beautiful, what is productive, what is socially valuable, criteria that most of us cannot "live up" to and, if we accept them, criteria that kill our self-esteem.

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HYSTERIA AT THE WHEEL, AS CURREY AND HIS COHORTS RESPOND TO THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

If you ever wondered if reactions to disability rights were motivated by bigotry and prejudice, you have no further to look than the reactions of Greyhound, the American Bus Association, ABA, and the United Bus Operators of America, UBOA, to the ADA. Twisting and exaggerating the cost of the requirements of the bill, Greyhound CEO Fred Currey has scared many of his workers across the US into believing that they will lose their jobs, and threatened that if lifts are required Greyhound's service to rural America will be devastated.

Recently some 20 ADAPT folks went to visit Currey in his corporate headquarters in Dallas. Carrying bundles of surgical gloves inflated like balloons, protesters let them loose in the lobby saying "here's what we think of your helping hands policy", "hands off our civil rights bill" and "we want access...not your handouts!"

When it was learned Currey was out of town that day protesters said they would wait, but when the building shut down at 5:30 (ie. after the local newscast) Greyhound had ADAPT protesters removed and 7 were taken to jail.



Mark MacTimus, Barbara Toomer, Anita Cameron and Stephanie Thomas hold one of the 20 buses in Atlanta photo: Tom Olin

Why is Mr. Currey so resistant to access? Rumor has it he voted in favor of lifts on the Dallas buses when he served on the Dallas transit Board of Directors. Under the current version of the ADA, he has 6 or 7 years to gear up and then is only required to equip new buses.

Many are thinking there may be a hidden agenda. His claims he will be bankrupted by the ADA do not jibe with recent actions by his company. Greyhound recently reported 17% increase in riders and cutting of fares for the third time this year. Mr. Currey and his family privately own the whole of Greyhound Lines Corp., paying \$175 million in cash and an additional \$75 million (approximately) in other financing. Ironically Currey's almost \$600,000 annual salary is not an economic hardship to Greyhound Lines. Whatever the reason, Currey has become one of the biggest barriers to passage of the ADA.

His original compromise plan was to organize a national paratransit service in which Section 16(b)2 vans would drive wheelchair users from one edge of the county to the other -- in a kind of relay service (of course he didn't take into account that most of these vans are not accessible.) This went over like a lead balloon, so now he is promoting a "five point plan" in which disabled riders would call in advance to make reservations and certain key stops would be equipped with a special boarding chair (like the airlines') to carry folks on and off the bus. Only "some" kinds of motorized wheelchairs would be allowed as baggage. (What kinds are "some" kinds? Non-motorized perhaps?)

It would seem Mr. Currey has not ridden his buses much or he would realize how absurd this plan is too. Many small town Greyhound stops are nothing more than a sign on the side of a drugstore, or a shed by the side of the road. Who would help the passenger on and off beside the driver? Greyhound bus steps are very steep and narrow with a sharp curve at the top of the steps.

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We disabled people can fight this psychological oppression, in part, by acknowledging what is uniquely valuable about disabled people as a group: our strength and resilience against such great odds, our flexibility and creativity in working out new ways to do things, our sense of humor when we share our common experiences. We are discovering that we can be proud of what we are, not in spite of our disability, but because of our disability. Disabled people are part of both disabled and non-disabled cultures, but at this point we need to concentrate as much as possible on our disability culture, until we can say "disabled is beautiful" with the same conviction and pride that the black culture learned to say "black is beautiful."

OUR LEADERS ARE GROWING.

Then there's the leadership function. ADAPT now has both disabled and non-disabled organizers, just as the black civil rights movement had black and white organizers. It is a little known fact that 19 of the original 27 board members of the NAACP were white. Similarly, disabled people cannot deny that many legislative victories have been won by non-disabled parents and professionals. But when we think of the high points of the black civil rights movement, don't we first think of its black leaders? If disabled people are to gain freedom and equality, our disabled leaders must gain the same visibility and respect, both in our eyes and those of society as a whole.

STEREOTYPES AND STIGMA MUST END. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, there is a process of changing prejudices, stereotypes and images. Like blacks, disabled people have been viewed as inferior, subhuman, and have been feared and forced into childlike roles. But stark contrasts in the stereotypes of blacks and disabled people also exist, and these differences demand a different process for society to undergo an "attitude adjustment."



Black people were enslaved by whites for the purpose of economic exploitation of their productive capabilities. White fear was largely that of the unjust oppressor fearing their victim's rebellion. Disabled people, on the other hand, are viewed as economic burdens. We are constantly called upon to prove that we are "worth" the costs of access. And when the non-disabled fear us, it isn't fear of disability revolt, it's a primitive emotional revulsion against "deformity".

When whites demonstrated and were arrested alongside blacks, the primary message they conveyed was their belief in and commitment to racial equality. They helped legitimize the black struggle in other white's eyes. No one would have expected even the most "benignly paternalistic" slave owner to participate in the movement to abolish slavery.

In contrast, when non-disabled people are seen actively participating and getting arrested in our movement, they need to be conscientious so that their words and actions cannot be misinterpreted to conform with the stereotypical paternalistic view of disabled people as helpless burdens who cannot lead or fight for themselves. As one ADAPT organizer recently pointed out, police and public officials usually believe that our able-bodied supporters really "pull our strings." The media are often similarly inclined. Of course, we're making progress: for example, in Reno, the "hanging judge" expressed his anger only toward some of ADAPT's disabled leaders. But we have a long way to go when a judge in Atlanta can say that a quadriplegic man's life is nothing but a living death, as was stated in the latest "right to die" court case.

It's not easy to blend these factors into a disability rights movement that is both powerful and empowering. But we must. And with attention, reflection and a dynamic historical perspective on all of our hard work and commitment, we will.

ADAPT GETS READY FOR
UBOA/UBOA CONFERENCE IN DALLAS

The United Bus Owners Association, UBOA and the American Bus Association, ABA, are the two major lobbying organizations for the private bus industry. For the first in history they will be holding their trade shows together in Dallas, Tx, Sunday January 21st through Wednesday January 24th 1990. These two trade associations have been actively working to destroy the transportation section of the Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA, by distorting the facts about accessible transportation.

Joe Carle, ADAPT of Texas organizer stated that, "We plan to give Wayne Smith, UBOA Executive Director, and Fred Currey, Chief Executive Officer of Greyhound, a down home southern style ADAPT welcome."

All ADAPTERS are invited to come to Dallas and show the UBOA and ABA members what APTA members now know so well. Please call Joe Carle at 214-902-9661.



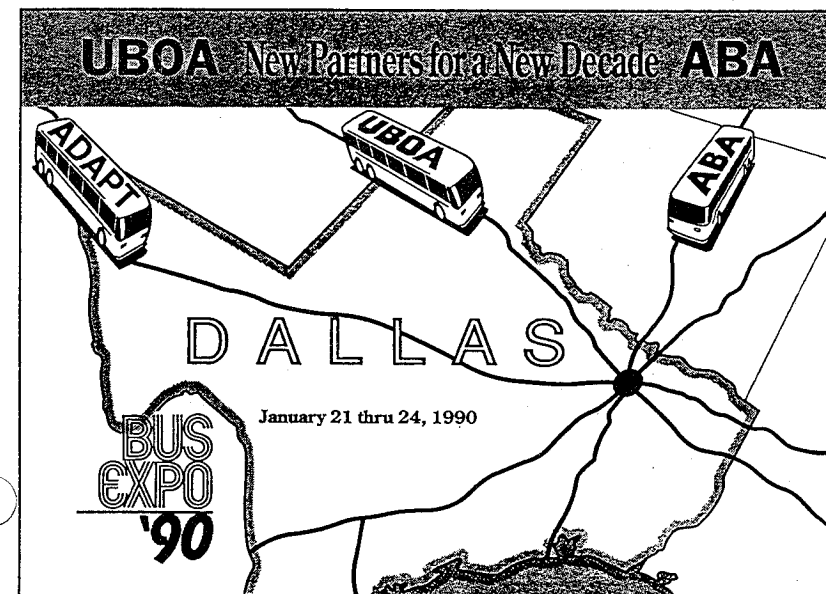
photo: Carolyn Long

Cathy Thomas displays the "handouts" given to Greyhound's corporate office.

ADAPT MEETS UMTA IN DC

One outcome of the ADAPT action in Atlanta was an agreement that there would be a meeting with UMTA officials to follow-up on UMTA's verbal commitment that they would do everything in their power to assure that all new buses would be accessible to disabled people.

Bob Kafka, Stephanie Thomas, Tim Cook and Evan Kemp met on October 10 in D.C. with three UMTA officials to work out the mechanisms that would allow ADAPT to monitor all the new bus requests made through UMTA. The two hour meeting outlined the way ADAPT would receive this information and how UMTA would use all legal methods to assure that all new buses were accessible.



**BUS
EXPO '90**
**ADAPT
UBOA/ABA**



Dallas, Texas
January 21 - 24, 1990

The Federal Marshalls provided blankets after dinner, though there weren't enough to go around, (the promised cots were all being used in Hurricane Hugo relief efforts) and even turned off the lobby lights for those sleeping on the cold marble floor. Some people slept in their wheelchairs. Some curled up on the furniture or under the giant indoor plants. Some found spots on the carpeted area downstairs by the bathrooms and cafeteria. Battery chargers were brought in, and since there weren't enough for everybody, people took turns using them. The once barren lobby looked chaotic, wheelchairs were everywhere, bodies crumpled on the floor, while a few volunteered to keep the watch. People were calling home to share the good news, "We seem to be close to victory" one said.

"There was something weird about waking up and having people passing your bed, walking to work past your head."

--Tom Olin

At daybreak, protesters and grumpy cleaning staff tidied up the place for the employees coming to work. ADAPT geared up for another day of protests. A meeting was called to let everyone know about the calls to DC and what pressures were being applied there.



Pictured here, and above, protesters block the Federal Building doors in Atlanta p.8



photos: Tom Olin

"I wasn't their mamma, and I didn't have them and I'm not God, so why do I have to put up with this?"
- Russell Federal Building Employee

TAKING THE ELEVATORS

The plan this time was for protesters to take the doors again and then the elevators, totally shutting down the building except for stairs, if the DOT did not send word by 12:30. On signal everyone rushed from their posts at the doors around the outside of the lobby and blocked open the elevators. Security, caught off guard failed to react in time. By now there were Federal Marshalls on the scene from as far away as Birmingham, AL.

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Representatives of the Greyhound drivers' union have told ADAPT they do not support Currey's efforts and they are not in favor of his five point plan.

The ABA, the APTA of Over-The-Road Coach services, seems to be taking its cues from Currey. Their cost statistics are based on the same inflated estimates, and their dire testimony on the ADA echos the "get them fighting among themselves" divide and conquer strategy. While claiming "We [ABA] are not aware of any person who has been excluded from a charter trip because a fully accessible bus was not available" they also predict "The ultimate cost of the proposed legislation would be paid in loss of service to most or all of the at least 9,000 communities where the intercity bus is the only form of public transportation, and ...persons who, although able-bodied, have limited access to public transportation because of rural residence or poverty level income, or both."

BOA Executive Director Wayne J. Smith was less subtle in his guest column in USA Today, where he begins: "Give till it hurts? Maybe. Give till its fatal? No." and ends "'Equal access to transportation' shouldn't mean 'everyone stays home.'" Not in the USA anyway."

*"When I feed the poor,
I am called a saint.
When I ask why the
poor are hungry, I am
called a communist."*

*-- Bishop Dom Helder
Camara
Recife, Brazil*

continued from p.8

when there was no response, protesters blocked the doors with our bodies, wheelchairs and chains.

WHITE HOUSE INTERVENES

At six p.m., the Federal Marshalls and Atlanta police moved in on the protesters, forcibly moving us away from the doors and outside. People yelled the loudest when we saw the police using baggage carts to haul one protestor away like a crate. Protesters stayed around blocking the doors from the outside, while the guards struggled to evict us. The rain continued to pour.

Suddenly at about seven, the doors of the Federal Building were opened to ADAPT. President George Bush had called from the White House after hearing about the demonstrations, saying that ADAPT had the right to protest at the Federal Building. The Regional General Services Administrator announced before the press the President's order to let ADAPT in and even provide cots and blankets. ADAPT was to have access to the accessible bathrooms on the lower plaza level of the building.

Protestors hailed the announcement with cheers, feelings soaring high. A Chinese victory feast was brought in and the information counter was turned into a temporary cafeteria. Everyone had hopeful fortune cookies.

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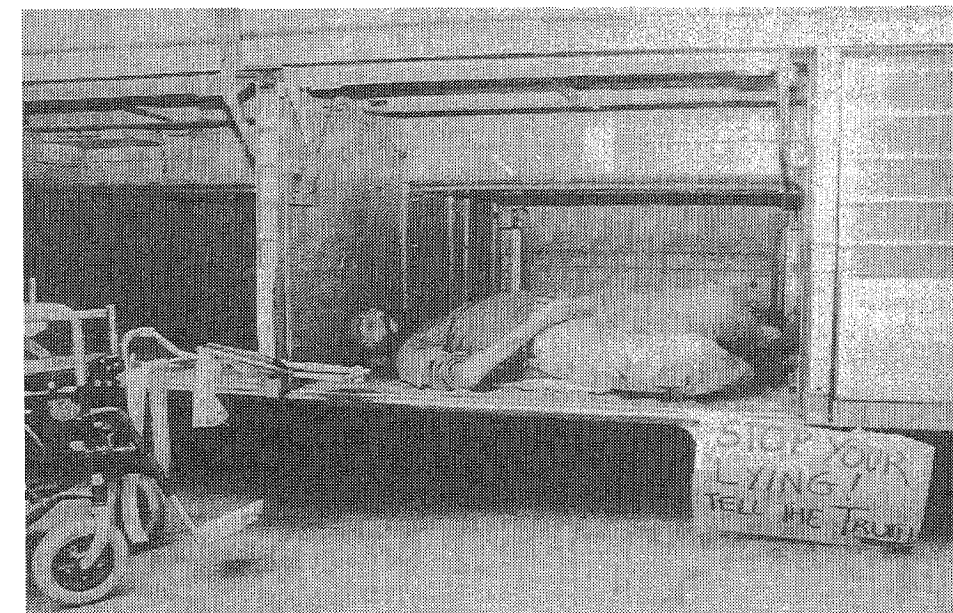


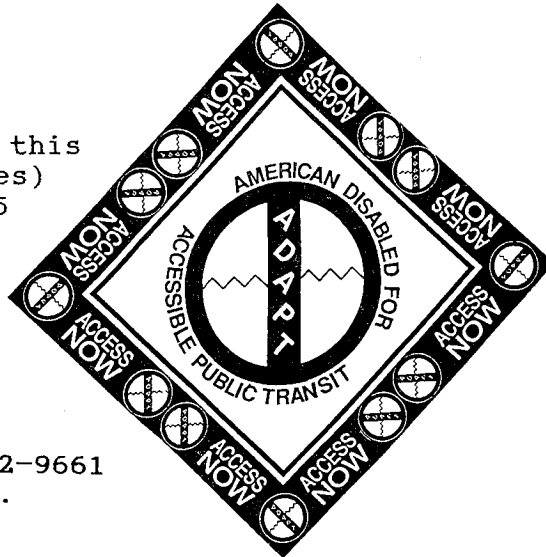
photo: Tom Olin

Greyhound, ABA and UBOA consider disabled folks less important than baggage. p. 11

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEARS IDEAS FROM ADAPT

Are you looking for good ideas for stocking stuffers, Christmas presents and/or motivation for the new year? ADAPT may have just the right item for you!!! Below are some great gifts which will also help get folks to the actions, and of course eventually make our world more accessible! Prices and ordering information are listed below each item.

ATLANTIS ADAPT of Dallas has several items with this design! T-shirts (\$10 adult sizes, \$9 kids sizes) Sweatshirts (\$15 adult, \$14 kids), Backpacks \$15 and bandanas \$3 - which can be used in too many ways to list here!
(Examples include: headband, scarf, kerchief, arm bands, face mask...)
LOTS OF BEAUTIFUL COLORS TOO!!!



To order yours call: 214/902-9661
or write: 3871 Highgrove Dr.
Dallas, TX 75220

Anti-Social for the Disabled features the work of disabled cartoonists and writers. It attempts to deal honestly with various situations and circumstances disabled people encounter in society.



ADAPT

P.O.Box 388246
Chicago, Illinois
60638

"ADAPT or PERISH" T-Shirt

Thought provoking! A conversation starter! Adaptation is the next evolutionary step. ADAPT (of Chicago) are the disabled activists fighting for accessibility in Chicago. Show you support accessibility! Support ADAPT!

SHIRTS \$10 each.

NAME:.....
STREET,CITY,STATE,ZIP:.....
SHIRT SIZE (S,M,L,XL) (adult only):.....
HOW MANY:.....
TOTAL \$:.....
(enclose check or money order payable to ADAPT)

HOLIDAY IDEAS FOR THE ADA

Even though the holiday season is usually pretty jammed, this year we can give each other a holiday gift with little effort and time. All the members of Congress have already left Washington DC for their home districts and will be back home until January 19th. Now is a great time to visit and let your House Representative know you want his/her support for the Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA.

In addition two national efforts are being planned.

1) Send a key to a member of the Public Works and Transportation Committee (listed on the other side of this page.) Any key will do: door, chest, diary, lift, car, bank box, hotel room, music box, safe, city, etc. You get the picture. The message to send with the key is:

Transportation is THE KEY to our independence and equality!

2) Enclosed you will find four New Years postcards. You need to send one to:

- * Representative Thomas Foley, Speaker of the House (Dem.)
- * Representative Bob Michel, Minority Leader (Rep.)
- * One to your Representative
- * and one to a member of the Transportation Committee (your choice) listed on the other side of this page.

***** folks from Texas *****

You need to send postcards to:

- * Representative Greg Laughlin (Transportation Committee)
- * Representative Jack Brooks (Chair of the Judiciary Committee and Dean of the Texas Delegation)
- * Your Representative
- * and one to Speaker Foley or Representative Michel.

***** ADDRESS FOR ALL HOUSE MEMBERS: *****

The Honorable _____ (name)
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515



MAJORITY MEMBERS/DEMOCRATS

*Glenn M. Anderson, California (Long Beach), Chairman
 *Robert Roe, New Jersey (Patterson, Bloomfield)
 *Norman Mineta, California (San Jose)
 *James Oberstar, Minnesota (Duluth)
 *Henry J. Nowak, New York (Buffalo)
 *Nick Joe Rahall II, West Virginia (Huntington)
 Douglas Applegate, Ohio (Steubenville)
 *Ron de Lugo, Virgin Islands
 *Gus Savage, Illinois (Chicago)
 Fofo I.F. Sunia, American Samoa
 *Douglas H. Bosco, California (Santa Rosa, Eureka)
 *Robert A. Borski, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia)
 *Joe Kolter, Pennsylvania (Beaver Falls, New Castle)
 Tim Valentine, North Carolina (Durham, Rocky Mount)
 *Edolphus Towns, New York (Brooklyn)
 *William O. Lipinski, Illinois (Chicago)
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 *John Lewis, Georgia (Atlanta)
 *Peter DeFazio, Oregon (Eugene)
 *Benjamin Cardin, Maryland (Baltimore)
 *David E. Skaggs, Colorado (Boulder)
 Jimmy Hayes, Louisiana (Lake Charles)
 *Bob Clement, Tennessee (Nashville)
 Lewis Payne, Jr., Virginia (Danville, Farmville)
 *Jerry F. Costello, Illinois (East St. Louis)
 *Frank Pallone, New Jersey (Long Branch, Toms River)
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 William Clinger, Jr., Pennsylvania (State College,
 Warren)
 Guy Molinari, New York (Staten Island)
 *Bob McEwen, Ohio (Portsmouth)
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 Ron Packard, California (Orange County)
 *Sherwood Boehlert, New York (Utica, Cortland)
 Jim Lightfoot, Iowa (Council Bluffs, Ft. Dodge)
 J. Dennis Hastert, Illinois (Elgin, Ottowa)
 James Inhofe, Oklahoma (Tulsa)
 Cass Ballenger, North Carolina (Hickory, Gastonia)
 Fred Upton, Michigan (St. Joseph, Holland)
 * - Co-Spon ADA
 Bill Emerson, Missouri (Rolla, Cape Girardeau)
 Larry Craig, Idaho (Boise, Lewiston)
 John J. Duncan, Jr., Tennessee (Knoxville, Athens)
 Mel Hancock, Missouri (Springfield, Joplin)
 C. Christopher Cox, California (Newport Beach)

Lonnie Smith & Annie Jones

(based on the cowboy song Windy Bill. new words c 1989 Charlie King)

Lonnie Smith was a Texas man, he could roll you bet
 The chair that Lonnie couldn't ride, well, he hadn't met it yet
 But the boys all talk about a front row seat, kind of an ornary cus
 Waitin there at the top of the stair on the Dallas crosstown bus

Now a Dallas bus will snub you if you're wheelin' in a chair
 And the boys bet Lonnie 2 to 1 that he couldn't quite get there
 So he straps himself to his racin' wheels without no brag or fuss
 In hot pursuit of that old cayoot, the Dallas crosstown bus

With his Phil Wood hubs & his clincher tires & a custom cage to boot
 And his Fastex straps tied hard and fast Lon goes to tackle the brute
 That crosstown bus pulls to the curb, the stairs about chest high
 He's resolute to ride the brute or perish in the try

He rode like Don Quixote at that mobile monolith
 The slope was steep & the folding door closed on Lonnie Smith
 The bus swung north, he bounced back south, fit to bust a spoke
 And the old mass trans and his cross town plans drove off in a cloud
 of smoke

Lonnie landed in the gutter and his hands and his face was scratched
 He'd ridden planes & cars & trains but he guessed he'd met his match
 He was heading home when Annie Jones rolled up in her Quickie Two
 "From the look on your puss I'd say that bus just got the best of you"

"The way this system treats us, why, you'd think that we had fleas
 But we're working on a law to bring those buses to their knees
 It's an uphill climb but worth the trip 'cuz friend, we're here to stay
 Come join the fun in Washington, come and lobby for the ADA."
 (Spoken) That's the Americans with Disabilities Act.

"We're gonna roll thru the Halls of Congress, gonna roll to the
 White House Door
 Gonna roll & roar 'We're all fired up, won't take it any more!"
 Let's roll on toes and call in debts. We got 'em all outclassed.
 Don't make no deals, don't lock your wheels until that bill has passed"

The moral of my story is as plain as it is apt
 With enough applied INCITEMENT we can teach them to ADAPT
 There's lots of things they do to me they'd never try with us
 Side by side we all can ride on the Dallas crosstown bus.



UMTA (Urban Mass Transit Administration, a division of the Department of Transportation) spokespeople arrived at this point, asking to negotiate with representatives of ADAPT. Squatting on the steps outside, the group came up with a hurried statement (see box). Steven Diaz, chief counsel for UMTA claimed it was not within Transportation Secretary Skinner's authority to issue an executive order mandating wheelchair lifts on all public buses. However, UMTA agreed to meet with ADAPT to establish a process to identify transit authorities deliberately speeding up bus purchases to circumvent the ADA (and its mandate of access) before it's passage. UMTA also agreed to relay to Skinner concerns about the incorrigibly slow implementation of the Air Carriers Access Act of 1986. Finally, UMTA agreed to help arrange for a continuing symbolic presence of our protest at the Federal Building. The statement was read to the press and the other protestors.

Although the agreement fell short of the original demands made at the start of the demonstration, it was agreed the statement conveyed the Government's intent to carry out the demands within a reasonable time frame.

RUSH HOUR GREYHOUND BLOCKADE

After the impromptu press conference, ADAPT vacated the Federal Building and marched back to the hotel in order to plan the attack on Greyhound the next day.

Greyhound Bus Lines Inc., the primary private interstate carrier, has persisted in its refusal to put lifts on its newly built or purchased buses, even if the technology is available. At the APTA conference (Greyhound is a member of APTA) five blocks from the Greyhound depot, there was an accessible Over-the-Road bus on display, made by MCI: one of the companies which makes buses for Greyhound.

continues ...

UMTA STATEMENT TO THE PRESS TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 26

We have had the opportunity to meet with representatives of the disabled community here in Atlanta today. We have mutually agreed to the following points:

1. The Urban Mass Transportation Administration will recommend to Secretary Skinner that officials of the Dept. of Transportation and representatives of the disabled community shall promptly meet and confer for the purpose of establishing a process for identifying and dealing with any eleventh hour attempt to circumvent the principal of accessibility prior to the adoption and effective date of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Full accessibility in public transit is the President's policy. We are making this recommendation because the Department cannot issue a summary order commanding immediate accessibility, including wheelchair accessibility for all transit. We would, if we could.

2. Because the President shares the sense of urgency of the demonstrators here in Atlanta for the passage by the House of Representatives of the Americans with Disabilities Act, we have agreed to recommend that a workable arrangement be negotiated to accommodate a continuing symbolic presence by the disabled community at the Richard B. Russell Federal Building.

3. We have also agreed to communicate to Secretary Skinner the concern expressed here that the current rulemaking for the implementation of the Air Carriers Access Act of 1986 is not on a sufficiently tight timetable and should be resolved at the earliest practicable date.

**Excerpt from a longer letter.*

Wednesday September 27th, ADAPT marched to the Greyhound depot, on Independence Blvd. in downtown Atlanta, and shut down all bus entrances and exits. Chanting and singing, "We Will Ride" and "Access not Excuses", protesters blocked arriving and departing Greyhounds, detaining over 20 buses at one time. Distributing flyers to the passengers, passers by and press, ADAPT brought operations to a virtual standstill, delaying all trips to the east coast by four hours and sending ripples of delay out west as well. Passengers, on the whole, took the delays in their stride. One man who was at first irate, ended up buying cigarettes, candy and sodas for the folks fighting for equality.



*Clayton Jones looks on as his motorcycle chain is cut from the Greyhound steering wheel by Atlanta police.
photo: Tom Olin*

Tom Street, Atlanta Greyhound Manager of Operations proposed negotiations via phone with the Greyhound Corporate Office in Dallas Texas. Speaking to ADAPT representatives, Liz Hale, Greyhound Public Relations Manager, said that Greyhound is in total support of the ADA, "except on transportation." With that statement it was clear negotiations were useless, and soon after the arrests began. Greyhound requested the arrest of 26 ADAPT protesters. Charges ranged from criminal trespass to disorderly conduct and failure to clear streets and sidewalks. Atlanta police had to cut several protesters loose from one another and from the steering wheels of several of the seized buses, as these people had chained themselves with bike locks and motorcycle chains.

MARTA PROVIDES ACCESS TO JAIL

Atlanta police transported those arrested to jail, using local accessible MARTA buses, painted white. Ironically, inside the buses were the MARTA newsletters, on their cover a resolution passed by the MARTA Board of Directors supporting 100% mainline access and urging APTA and its other members to do the same. Processed quickly in some kind of recreation room, protesters were released in about an hour on our own recognizance. Local civil rights lawyers, some from the ACLU, handled the cases in court the next day, and all 26 were given suspended sentences.

With three successful protests in Atlanta in less than one week, ADAPT and the other groups participating (including Cape Organization for Rights of the Disabled, Disabled in Action, Disabled Americans Rally for Equality, and National Council on Independent Living, to name some) had made a great push for equality, access and passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

"The civil rights movement started because of busing. We just want the right to ride the bus."

--Jerry Eubanks

Current law allows free reign on disabled peoples right to ride. And plenty of local transit authorities are taking full advantage of this open season on our rights. Cities like Cincinnati, whose bus fleet is over 50% lift equipped but ALL THEIR LIFTS ARE BOLTED DOWN, are free to practice their deliberate discrimination. Some transit systems are finally realizing access makes sense, however, and are making great strides toward access. Here then are ADAPT's pick of the ten most and ten least accessible systems. This year for the first time Canadian systems are included. For more info. contact Mark Johnson, 145 Greenmont Circle, Alpharetta GA. 30201, phone 404/355-9772 or Bob Reuter PO Box 1514, Baltimore MD 21203 ph. 301/327-6119

TEN MOST ACCESSIBLE

Cambria County Transit District Johnstown, PA
 Capital Metro Transit Authority Austin, TX
 Golden Gate Bridge & Highway Trans Dist. San Rafael, CA
 Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle Seattle, WA
 New York City Transit Authority New York, NY
 Regional Transit District Denver, CO
 San Francisco Municipal Railway San Francisco, CA
 Santa Clara County Transit District San Jose, CA
 Southern CA Rapid Transit District Los Angeles, CA
 Tri County Metropolitan Transportation Portland, OR

HONORABLE MENTION

Miami Valley Regional Transit Authority Dayton, OH
 Niagara Frontier Transit Buffalo, NY
 Sacramento Regional Transit District Sacramento, CA
 U of Illinois Transportation Champaign-Urbana, IL

CANADA

Calgary Transit Calgary Alberta
 Edmonton, Alberta Edmonton, Alberta

TEN LEAST ACCESSIBLE

City and County of Honolulu Honolulu, HI
 Detroit Department of Transportation Detroit City, MI
 Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority Cleveland, OH
 Indianapolis Public Transportation Corp Indianapolis, IN
 Mass Transit Administration of MD Baltimore, MD
 Metropolitan Transit Commission Minneapolis, MN
 Port Authority of Allegheny County Pittsburg, PA
 Queen City Metro Cincinnati, OH
 Regional Transit Authority New Orleans, LA
 Rochester Genesee Region Regional Transit Authority Rochester, NY

DISHONORABLE MENTION

Central Ohio Transit Authority Columbus, OH
 Charlotte Transit System Charlotte, NC
 Concord Area Transit Concord, NH
 Madison Metro Transit Authority Madison, WI
 Montgomery County, Ride On Rockville, MD

CANADA

Montreal Urban Community Transit Corp. Montreal, Quebec
 Toronto Transit Commission Toronto, Ontario

Tulsa, OK -- Just back from the intensity of Atlanta, Tulsans for Accessible Public Transit, TAPT, was called into action when their transit authority MTTA added severe restrictions to their paratransit service. (MTTA has bought 16 mainline lift equipped buses which will arrive in January, and 8 more due next year for their 100 bus fleet, but until these arrive paratransit is the only public transit option in Tulsa.) Several TAPT members chained themselves to the doors of the MTTA offices and were arrested. TAPT vows it will not rest until disabled Tulsans have transit they can use.



CORD member Kent Killian returning a soda can for 5 cent deposit the only way he can with steps, by crawling. photo: Bill Henning

Colorado Springs, CO -- ADAPT activists Greg Buchanan, Patty Leffingwell and Anita Cameron were tried last month for their actions at a peace protest at Falcon Air Force Base in May 1989. The three demanded a trial and got one, defending themselves. Six other protesters had their charges dropped when two of the military witnesses failed to appear. Cameron is currently serving a twenty five day sentence relating to this case.

Hyannis, MA -- The Cape Organization for Rights of the Disabled, CORD, took to the streets to protest an inaccessible shopping center which is violating state access law. "A springtime hearing found them in non-compliance with the law," said CORD organizer Mike Early. "They've ignored the law..." Barriers include an ice machine and doors which are propped open blocking the sidewalk, and steps leading into the shops. The protestors focused on the Barnstable Bottle Shoppe, a liquor store owned by Mr. Franco, one of the shopping center owners. "Fines are being assessed at the rate of \$800 each day (that the stores and centers remain inaccessible,) and when they reached \$52,000 the AAB (state Architectural Access Board) sent a demand notice for their payment" Early explained. Franco's response to the protest? He called the cops. And the issue got lots of press.

"The steamship Authority says it has compassion for the plight of the handicapped. Compassion is meaningless without action to back it up."

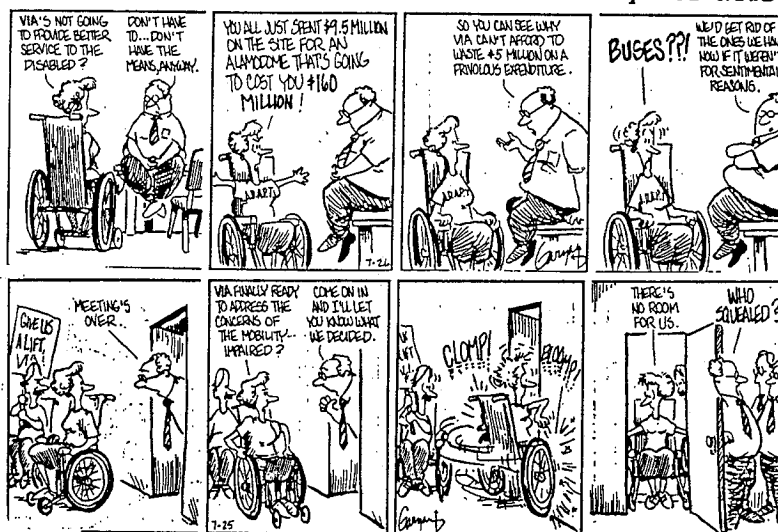
-- CORD member Julie Nolan

Access to the ferries is another project of CORD's. Problems range from boarding the boat from the shore, to not being able to get above the cargo deck, to lack of access to restrooms and snack counters. Each ferry seems to come with its own set of problems, but CORD has made it clear that after 3 1/2 they are tired of excuses. As Julie Nolan put it "The Uncatena (one of the worst ferries) is a lousy excuse for an accessible vessel. I'm disgusted with riding below. It's a humiliating experience." CORD is considering plans to block the ship.

AROUND THE NATION

Everett, WA -- Trickle down becomes a reality in accessible transit as the Snohomish County Public Transportation Benefit Area Corporation bought 12 lift equipped buses from Denver's RTD! "When we heard the coaches for sale were lift equipped, it was an incentive for us to look at them," said transit director Ken Granska.

Nacho Guarache Leo Garza, San Antonio Express News



San Antonio, TX -- After all the hoopla around VIA's policies regarding access, the VIA board finally voted to buy accessible buses in their next bus purchase. This is a major victory since Wayne Cook, VIA's General Manager, has long been one of the staunchest opponents of access to buses. However, the VIA Board and staff apparently misled the San Antonio disability community into believing they were changing their policy to one of buying all new buses with lifts. THIS IS NOT THE CASE! The resolution, as it finally appeared in print, refers only to this specific purchase. Though the VIA Board has told disabled San Antonians to "trust us", they have given little reason to do so! The disability groups' convention/meeting boycott of San Antonio continues. (For a copy of the resolution and/or the VIA address write or call ADAPT of TX.)

Boston, MA -- Massachusetts disability activists took to the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority, MBTA, trolley tracks November 4th, calling for access. "This is an act of passive civil disobedience," Linda Long, one of the protesters explained. "We want to make the Green Line accessible to everyone, but they [MBTA] want to maintain their separate but equal policy -- which is not equal." Four protesters chained themselves to the trolley until MBTA transit cops cut the chains and escorted the protesters from the area. "Hopefully we'll see a commitment from the T now," said Michael Muehe another protester, but he added "otherwise we'll be back."

Victory in Vancouver

Vancouver, WA -- A recent victory was won in Vancouver USING PART C OF THE D.O.T. 504 REGULATIONS !!!!!!!! The Superior Court of Clark County ruled that all new C-Trans vehicles purchased with federal funds must be accessible. Lonnie Davis, of the Disabilities Law Projects, noted "this decision is the first that we were aware of that Subpart C has been relied on as the basis for ordering wheelchair lifts on buses and it is the first transit decision since the ADAPT decision, which is still in process."

The suit was a class action suit brought by four individuals (Gary Buchanan, Marie Black, Ron Hoffman and Shirley Remsing) and it applies only to this particular purchase of buses by this system. It does not set a precedent, but, according to the Washington Governor's Committee newsletter, "it does carry persuasive authority for other actions which may be heard regarding accessible transit." For more information contact: Joyce Brekke at Evergreen Legal Services 500 West 8th St. Suite 275, Vancouver WA 98660 206/331-3533

AROUND THE NATION

San Diego, CA -- The County Transit System has recently announced their Express Bus service has 16 new lift equipped vehicles. "We're very pleased to welcome these new buses to our Express Bus system," County Supervisor John MacDonald said. "The wheelchair lifts are a real plus for County Transit..." Goodall's Charter Bus Service Inc is providing the buses as part of a contract with the County for the Express service.

Austin, TX -- When Capital Metro Transit Authority safety personnel recently dug up a 4 yr. old unenforced policy that said three-wheeled (Amigo type) and four-small-wheeled (Fortress type) wheelchairs would be banned from the buses because their wheels did not fit existing tie downs, it didn't go over big in the disability community. ADAPT of Austin swung into action at the main downtown bus stop. After the first bus let its lift down ADAPTER Tony Theonnis sat his Fortress halfway on and half way off. Other ADAPT members swarmed up and down the bus stop trying to capture lifts, and finally a group rolled out into the street to block the buses when they wouldn't stop or let down their lifts. Support from the disability advisory committee added fuel to the fire. Capital Metro felt the pressure, and changed their policy so all folks can ride, and Capital Metro will get better tie-downs.

Airport access is another issue in Austin. When the local airport began to renovate, access modifications were intentionally left out of the plan. Austin is considering building a new airport at a new location, and this was given as the excuse. When a local disabled person filed a complaint with the ATBCB, the airport received a request from the FAA for them to file for a waiver from 504 requirements. One action has been held and more will follow.

Chicago, IL -- "The palace of the bigots is collapsing like a house of cards..." Mike Irwin of Chicago ADAPT said describing the recent about face of Chicago's Regional Transit Authority. RTA is considering a proposal which would require access to all bus and commuter rail services as well as doubling funding for services for riders with disabilities. The proposal would also place caps on funding for these services however. The systemwide cost of paratransit is what led RTA to the conclusion that lifts are the more cost effective way. CTA is denying thousands of ride requests in order to stay within budget, even though CTA is spending \$12.4 million, twice as much as in 1986.

"We have 'gotten religion' on this issue... Our sense is that the demand [for transportation for the handicapped] is insatiable. It seems that there is no end to it."

-- Theodore Weigle Jr,
Executive Director CTA

According to the Chicago Tribune CTA has bought enough lift equipped buses so that 50% of its rush hour fleet and 100% of its off-peak hours fleet will be accessible. PACE, the suburban system is 21% accessible.

Newark, NJ -- The Airlink buses operating between downtown Newark and the Newark International Airport now are lift equipped. This is one of the first airports transit services to become accessible. "We're proud to add the Airlink route to the list of services we offer mobility impaired riders" said Thomas Gagliardi, Executive Director of NJ Transit which runs Airlink.

ARE THERE THINGS HAPPENING IN YOUR NECK OF THE WOODS RELATING TO ACCESSIBLE TRANSIT AND/OR DISABILITY ACTIVITISM? LET OTHERS KNOW ABOUT THEM. DROP US A LINE AT INCITEMENT SO WE CAN ADD YOUR INFORMATION TO "AROUND THE NATION."