



# Weekly Topics

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## ELASTIC SCHEDULES

Last week we detailed a few of the complexities of the tremendous jig-saw puzzle — "Mass Transportation". We touched upon the master schedules with their complex series of time points, but we didn't bring up the subject of the manpower shortage and what happens when a number of scheduled cars and coaches actually fail to pull out onto the streets.

So, let's talk about our "Elastic Schedules".

We can't stretch a car or a coach like a rubber band. They won't give. But we can stretch the space between each car. The space or "headway" gives elasticity to the schedule. It's as simple as that.

But stretching a schedule is not so simple, even though one Supervisor in charge of each line performs the feat over and over, day in and day out. Perhaps you've noticed the Supervisor at a control point (a place where two or more lines converge) hold

up three fingers in a signal to the operator of your car. Sometimes he holds them down. Sometimes he holds up five fingers, followed by a round and round motion with a doubled fist. Maybe you've thought he was a bit batty. He wasn't. He was regulating the flow of mass transportation to the extent of his own line — stretching that rubber schedule.

When he makes relief, generally just before the rush begins, he is equipped with a revised schedule—the nearest figure the Schedule Department can establish as to how many cars he'll have on his line for that day. His dispatcher notifies him as to the number of cars held in already, and as the afternoon wears along, the Division Superintendent ad-

vises him as rush hour "trippers" are held in.

Then manipulations begin. In his mind he pictures his line as a picket fence, the cars the pickets, the headway the space between. If his normal line holds forty cars with a five minute headway, and only thirty cars are operating, the space between each car should be six or six and one-half minutes instead of five. But what if those cars come out of one end of the line? Or two or three in a group? Let's watch the Supervisor as he manipulates to fill the "hole in his line".

But first let's learn his signals. Fingers held downward mean "leave end of line so many minutes late". Each finger represents a minute. Fingers held up, "leave ahead of schedule". Arms crossed tells the operator to "take the crossover". Patting motion with right hand, palm down, means "slow down—wait for your follower to take his passengers". One-half minute is

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JOIN THE MARCH  
OF  
DIMES**

indicated by placing the forefinger of the right hand half way on the finger of the left hand. Round and round motion with doubled fist, "wrap it up—step along—or, hurry back". The universal "O.K." signal is used to tell the operator that he must stay on his own time.

Car No. 1 comes along. The Supervisor holds three fingers down, which tells the operator to leave the end of the line three minutes late. Car No. 2 is signaled with crossed arms and the fist going around and around, meaning take the nearest crossover and hurry back. Three fingers go up for Car No. 3—leave three minutes ahead of time. Car No. 3 must fill in for Car No. 2. Car No. 4 may be

held back to take passengers from No. 5 so 5 can tear back and fill the place of No. 32. And so on—each car is shifted so that the space between lengthens as quickly as possible.

So the holes are filled in his line. The mass movement of humans goes merrily on, and the little man at Seventh and Broadway waits only a minute longer for his "5" car at quitting time, unmindful, of course, of the switching, turnbacks, manipulations, the stretching or tightening of elastic schedules which kept the minute from being an hour's delay.

**Hear - The Talk of Our Town  
SOUTHLAND NEWS CAST  
Monday through Saturday  
KFAC — 11:30 A.M.**

### POLLY PATTERSON POINTERS

**Odors:** Put 1 teaspoon ammonia in a large bowl of water. Leave it in the room over night and it will remove the odor of fresh paint or cigarette smoke.

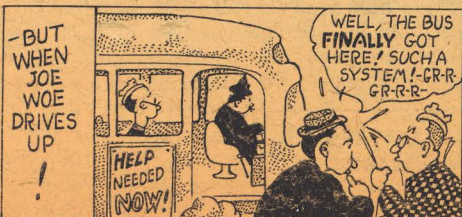
When preparing a meat loaf, add the contents of a can of chicken noodle soup before putting it in the oven—it will be much juicier and tastier.

A cracked vase or flower bowl can still be used if you coat the inside with a thick layer of paraffin or candle wax. This will prolong the wear indefinitely.

Joe Woe's favorite story is about the medium who is worth her weight in ghouls.

"War," says Sgt. Mulligan, "does not determine who is right—only who is left."

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