

The Union Pacific and the Southern Pacific recently announced that they had filed with the ICC for permission to purchase the Portland Traction Co., which runs from Portland to Oregon City and Boring, and which owns right-of-way to Estacada, but which has not been used for a number of years. This action had been rumored for some time but the UP and SP were apparently waiting to see how the Portland Traction came out of their legal difficulties with the state in connection with the discontinuance of their suburban service. Purchase price was reported to be \$4,275,000. The Portland Traction has a number of variable industrial tracts along its line, especially in the Milwaukee, Oregon area.

* * * * *

The PNERA "inter Wonderland tour over the Milwaukee Road on March 25-26 turned out to be a thoroughly enjoyable trip, in spite of a few difficulties encountered and inclement weather. At 5:30 am on the day of the trip, a derailment north of Ridgefield, WA cancelled all trains between Portland and Seattle. Quick action on the part of Union Pacific officials brought several Gray Line buses to the rescue and the trip to Seattle was made by bus. One of the buses, the one on which your editor was riding, started acting up out of Woodland, WA when the governor started kicking out. After several attempts to make repairs with string a lady passenger donated a wire coat hanger, which did the trick, and the bus continued on to Seattle arriving approximately 45 minutes late. After a very delicious meal in the King Street Station in Seattle, which is available to anyone for 75 cents, we went to the Union Station where we boarded the Milwaukee's Olympian Hiawatha, which had arrived rear-end first from Tacoma. The diesels were moved to the head of the train and departed on the advertised time of 3:30 pm, with our group in three special Milwaukee coaches. There were very few regular passengers on the train, with not more than 5 or 6 in the Pullman section, which indicates why the Milwaukee is endeavoring to discontinue the train. Leaving Seattle the train uses the tracks of the Pacific Coast Railway. After leaving Renton the line goes through very few communities before reaching Cle Elum. The scenery is very nice along the line, passing through timber most of the way. There is a continual grade to the top of the line where the railroad goes through a long tunnel. There wasn't too much snow on the ground on the west side of the mountains but as soon as we emerged from the tunnel, we noticed that snow was much deeper and one lake was still frozen over. Our train was pulled by diesels but we did see several electric units that were used on freight trains—one set at Cedar Falls which were apparently used in helper service, and one set at Cedar Falls which were apparently used in helper service, and one set at Cle Elum that pulled out with a freight train while we were standing at the station. The Milwaukee deadheaded a dining car crew all the way from Chicago just to serve the evening meal, which was really appreciated. The facilities at the Ridpath Hotel in Spokane were excellent. Six of the more avid railfans on the trip got up early Sunday morning and took the NP Budd car to Spangle, Washington, which is 20 miles out of Spokane, on the Lewiston branch. This is as far as one can go and still catch a bus back to Spokane in time to catch the UP. We were very much impressed with the riding qualities of the Budd car and would like to ride it all the way to Lewiston some time. The ride from Spokane to Hinkle was very interesting, inasmuch as it was during daylight hours. The train descends into the Snake River canyon, which is very desolate country, and crosses the Snake River on the highest bridge on the UP system. At Hinkle, one of the UP "Pub Cars" was added to the train to handle all the passengers, inasmuch as the regular coach on the UP Mail Train was already filled. The run into Portland was made in fast time. PNERA is planning to run the trip again this weekend for those unable to take the trip earlier. See Chuck Hayden at the UP City Ticket Office for information.

* * * * *