

Monon Changes Approved

FOLLOWING a hearing, the Interstate Commerce Commission, on November 2, issued a decision approving of certain changes in automatic block signaling on the Chicago, Indianapolis & Louisville. An abstract of the decision follows:

"The Monon has 353 miles of line equipped with automatic block signals of the upper quadrant semaphore type. There are 29.5 miles equipped with two-position signals and the remainder are three-position signals. At the time of installation, the signals were placed at locations where the most satisfactory distances at which they could be seen by enginemen on approaching trains could be obtained, and it was considered that the distance from which the indication of a signal could be seen, plus the distance between it and the next signal, afforded ample distance in which to stop a train.

"Under sections 204 and 207 of the rules, standards and instructions for installation, inspection, maintenance and repair of automatic block signal and other systems, promulgated by the Commission on April 13, 1939, spacing and arrangement of signals are specified.

"It is recognized by petitioner that relocation of certain signals and changes in the control circuits are required to secure adequate stopping distances in compliance with the rules cited, and the proposed changes here under consideration are intended to bring these systems into conformity with the foregoing requirements.

"The changes petitioner desires to make are covered by four applications involving signals on the lines between Monon and Belt Junction, Ind., Hammond and Lafayette, Ind., Lafayette Junction and Bloomington, Ind., Bloomington and Orleans, Ind., and Fogg and Borden, Ind. The proposed rearrangement involves the installation of 14 signals and the removal of 266 signals. It provides for minimum stopping distances of 4,000 ft. for following train movements, and 8,000 ft. between opposing intermediate signals.

"There have been a number of changes made in operating conditions on the lines involved since installation of the present signal system. This has resulted in the removal of or changes in 16 side tracks formerly used as meeting points for trains. The block signals which were formerly necessary to safeguard movement of trains at these meeting points still remain in place but are no longer required. The change in the use of side tracks is due

in part to the decreased number of trains operated over the road, particularly on subdivisions between Monon and Indianapolis. In a number of cases it is proposed to use a single signal at locations where there are now two signals, one for each direction, and to modify the signal circuits so that standard railway signal practice will still obtain.

"Some of the signals involved were installed because of the use of an automatic train stop system which has since been discontinued. The first block signals on petitioner's line were installed in 1911. The blocks at that time were comparatively short for a number of reasons, one of which was a rule which required a flagman to proceed on foot ahead of a train under certain circumstances. This rule has since been modified and that method is no longer required. Other rules have been made effective which relate to the subject of trains passing caution signals. It is the position of petitioner that with the changed conditions referred to it is entirely consistent with safety and good operating practice to make the changes proposed, and at the same time retain an adequate automatic signal system. It is claimed the signals will conform to the rules previously cited and that the safety of operation would not be decreased. An annual saving of about \$9,000 would be realized, and the estimated cost of making the changes is \$16,300.

"No evidence was offered by protestants in this case. Their principal objection to the changes proposed relates to the possibility that certain sidings which are not now generally used for meeting or passing of trains, and which are at present protected by block signals, will in the future be used for such operation of trains after the protection which now exists by reason of block signals is removed. Petitioner asserts that it is not intended that the sidings involved would be so used regularly, and that such use would be infrequent; however, it is admitted that these sidings might be used for such purposes at any time, and that when so used the signal system as proposed to be modified would not provide the same degree of protection as is now furnished for a movement from siding to main line. If and when the proposed modifications are made, signal protection equivalent to that now furnished for a train moving from siding to main line should be provided by the use of suitable locking or other signal devices.

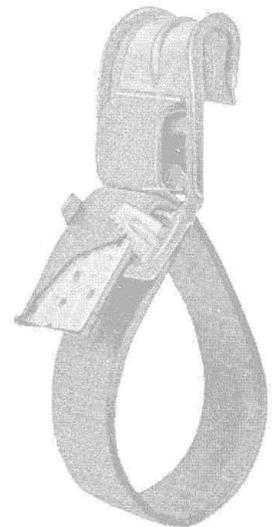
"Our interest is concerned only

with the safety of operation. The plan as proposed by petitioner is designed to rearrange the present signal system to meet the requirements of present operating needs and to comply with standards intended to promote safety.

"We find that the plan as proposed with the modification noted herein, will not result in decreased safety of train operation, and that the petition should be granted. An appropriate order will be entered."

New Device Cable Strap

THE Railroad Accessories Corporation has developed a new kind of strap for use in Raco cabling straps. It consists of a stainless steel strip which is covered with a rubber compound, developed for use under various climatic and service conditions. The stainless



Stainless
steel strap
cable hanger

steel strip has staggered perforations through which the rubber compound flows, thus holding the strip in place.

Advantages claimed for the new strap are that it will not burn, has increased strength, and that the stainless steel strip will not rust or deteriorate. It is claimed that there are practically no bending strains on the strap, as sway is taken up by the hook moving on the messenger, this being largely due to the design of the Raco cabling strap and the method of fastening it to the cable. It is stated that Raco cabling straps can be tightened on the cable without danger of electrical contact with the messenger.