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Autolog starts transporting private cars to Miami via railroad

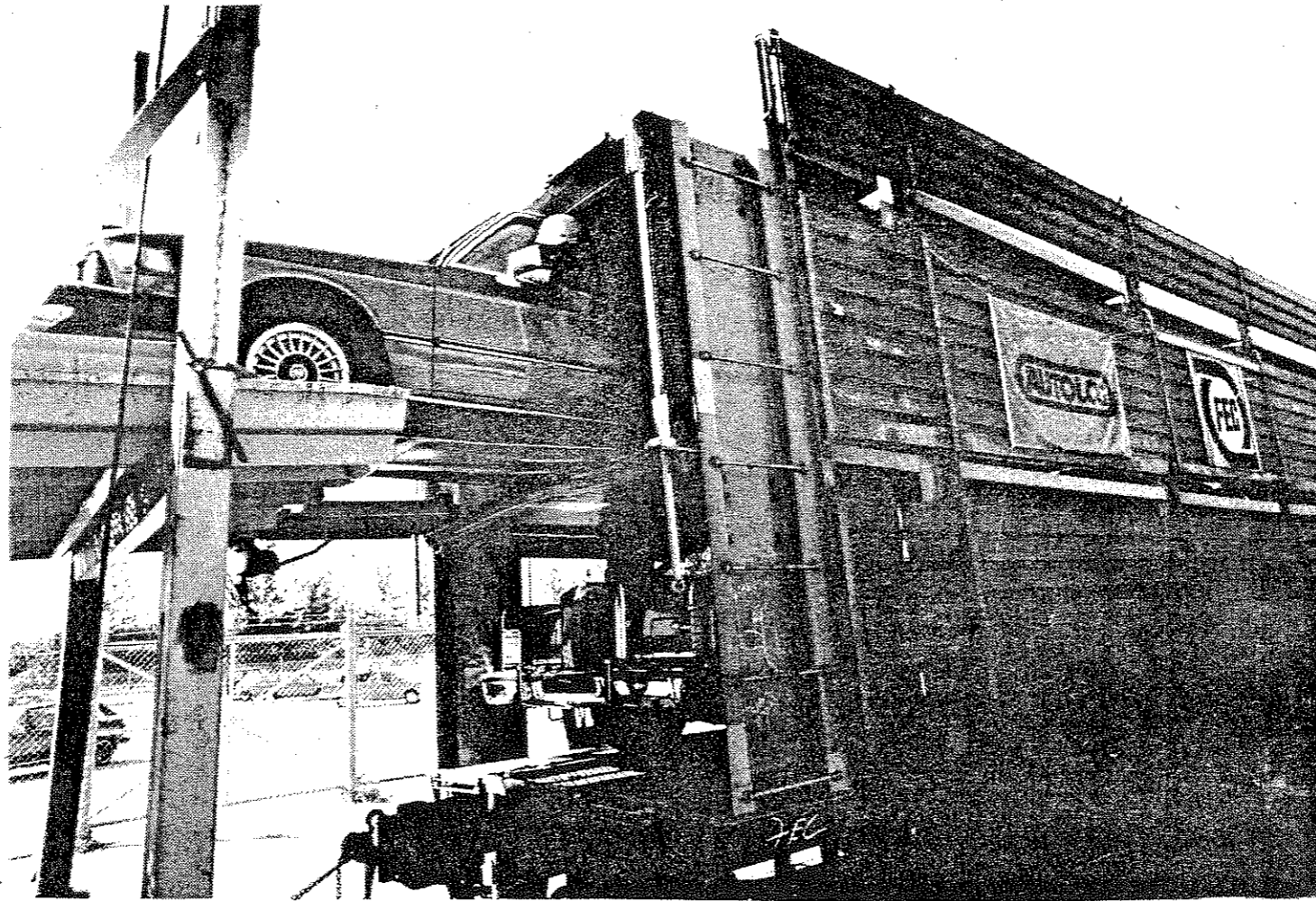
A new transportation era for northern vacationers began this month in Miami's Florida East Coast rail yards when the first shipment of privately owned automobiles arrived from Alexandria, Va., aboard auto-carriers of the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad.

Behind this new time-saving, energy-saving method of moving personal automobiles from the northeast to South Florida by rail is Autolog Corp. of Jersey City, N.J., who for a half-dozen years has been one of the nation's leading transporters of private autos. Until this month Autolog has moved cars from city to city via its fleet of tractor-trailer trucks.

"Our decision to initiate rail forwarding on the long northeast-to-Miami haul," said Myron Levine, Autolog president, "was because there is a need and we opted to fill the need."

The young Autolog chief executive officer calls the new rail service a revival of the defunct Auto-Train concept with some important differences. He pointed out that owners are no longer required to travel by train with their autos and that owners are not forced to drive long distances to and from the north and south terminuses of the service, as was the case with Auto-Train.

Autolog has terminals throughout the northeast including Washington, D.C., New York, Boston, Hartford, Providence, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Buffalo.



Cars owned by tourists and vacationers now arrive by rail from Northeastern U.S. cities

Levine pointed out that the success of their cars at any of the company's city terminals, and the cars will be delivered by truck to railside. In this way, a major Auto-Train problem — low railroad

tunnels and bridges in the northeast — is eliminated.

"We studied the problems of Auto-Train very carefully," he said, "and we believe we have removed all roadblocks. This innovative way of moving cars to Florida easily and economically from anywhere in the northeast will be successful."

An attorney, who at one time worked for the Securities and Exchange Commission, Levine waged a long struggle hacking his way through red tape at the Interstate Commerce Commission before Autolog was approved by the U.S. government. One of ICC's fears, he says, "was that as Autolog grew, Auto-Train would suffer."

When Auto-Train chose the Chapter XI bankruptcy route and finally went out of business last April, Autolog and the demand for its service to Florida increased tremendously, he said.

Levine considers Autolog's charges for moving a car to Florida "a bargain", pointing out that the \$285 one-way fare from Washington to Miami (\$397 New York-Miami) is less than a two-week car rental of a major auto leasing firm.

"And our clients have their own cars while on vacation — an important factor, especially for senior citizens."

Via Autolog, automobiles make the Alexandria-to-Miami trip non-stop in two days, using the facilities of three railroads — RF&P, Seaboard and Florida East Coast (FEC).