



HIDDEN TRUTH SHOW WITH JIM BRESLO
TRAIN TO NOWHERE

AVAILABLE ON ALL PODCAST APPS

HIDDEN
TRUTH
WITH JIM BRESLO

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:05,040

[Music]

2
00:00:17,550 --> 00:00:15,060

I question the original vision because

3
00:00:20,070 --> 00:00:17,560

my first reaction when I heard about the

4
00:00:23,010 --> 00:00:20,080

project is okay a high-speed train from

5
00:00:23,910 --> 00:00:23,020

San Francisco to Los Angeles that's not

6
00:00:26,040 --> 00:00:23,920

my problem

7
00:00:28,260 --> 00:00:26,050

I don't have a problem getting to San

8
00:00:30,270 --> 00:00:28,270

Francisco I get there quite easily and

9
00:00:32,670 --> 00:00:30,280

quite cheaply and quite quickly on

10
00:00:35,880 --> 00:00:32,680

Southwest Airlines my problem is getting

11
00:00:37,530 --> 00:00:35,890

to work so let's kind of start in the

12
00:00:40,430 --> 00:00:37,540

beginning the original vision of this

13
00:00:44,510 --> 00:00:40,440

what problem wasn't really solving uh

14

00:00:48,900 --> 00:00:47,670

Californians who vacation in Europe and

15

00:00:51,210 --> 00:00:48,910

when they're in Europe they take a

16

00:00:54,330 --> 00:00:51,220

bullet train and I think oh this is cool

17

00:00:58,680 --> 00:00:54,340

I would like to have this in California

18

00:01:01,650 --> 00:00:58,690

and really I it sounds amazing but I was

19

00:01:03,740 --> 00:01:01,660

talking with a Democratic Club a couple

20

00:01:06,389 --> 00:01:03,750

years ago and I asked how many people

21

00:01:09,809 --> 00:01:06,399

support how many people have been to

22

00:01:11,639 --> 00:01:09,819

Europe or Japan and ridden you're the

23

00:01:14,010 --> 00:01:11,649

wind of all training and like half the

24

00:01:15,959 --> 00:01:14,020

hands went out I said how many of you

25

00:01:17,969 --> 00:01:15,969

voted for it because you'd like to see

26

00:01:20,809 --> 00:01:17,979

that here and they all went all the

27

00:01:25,379 --> 00:01:20,819

hands went up at the same time so I

28

00:01:27,449 --> 00:01:25,389

think that people who are tourists in

29

00:01:30,300 --> 00:01:27,459

Europe which clearly not the working

30

00:01:32,760 --> 00:01:30,310

class middle class people in California

31

00:01:35,219 --> 00:01:32,770

went there and saw and they they thought

32

00:01:40,499 --> 00:01:35,229

this is something we should have here

33

00:01:43,469 --> 00:01:40,509

and the offer was what we could get

34

00:01:45,949 --> 00:01:43,479

between San Francisco and LA in two

35

00:01:49,980 --> 00:01:45,959

hours and 20 minutes that was the

36

00:01:56,779 --> 00:01:49,990

requirement and the bond Act and I don't

37

00:02:00,690 --> 00:01:56,789

know that anybody really did enough

38

00:02:02,969 --> 00:02:00,700

analysis of over how hard that would be

39

00:02:09,020 --> 00:02:02,979

he could you know financially to achieve

40

00:02:13,290 --> 00:02:09,030

um technically socially politically

41

00:02:15,450 --> 00:02:13,300

legally all those things were became

42

00:02:17,210 --> 00:02:15,460

much more difficult because of that

43

00:02:21,910 --> 00:02:17,220

speed requirement

44

00:02:25,220 --> 00:02:21,920

mm-hmm so the concern over large

45

00:02:26,750 --> 00:02:25,230

governments large government projects

46

00:02:28,670 --> 00:02:26,760

has kind of borne out to be correct

47

00:02:31,930 --> 00:02:28,680

because this project is turned to turned

48

00:02:36,220 --> 00:02:31,940

out to go figuratively off the rails

49

00:02:39,230 --> 00:02:36,230

with the explosion of the cost estimates

50

00:02:41,330 --> 00:02:39,240

and the fact that it doesn't even look

51
00:02:47,150 --> 00:02:41,340
like the high-speed is going to be able

52
00:02:50,090 --> 00:02:47,160
to be achieved it's gone off the rails

53
00:02:53,390 --> 00:02:50,100
because the cost is spiraled off so you

54
00:02:57,830 --> 00:02:53,400
have to ask well has the cost I rolled

55
00:03:00,260 --> 00:02:57,840
up because they underestimated what it

56
00:03:04,010 --> 00:03:00,270
was gonna cost in any case or had they

57
00:03:07,090 --> 00:03:04,020
mismanaged it over the last half dozen

58
00:03:09,850 --> 00:03:07,100
years and I think clearly they

59
00:03:12,770 --> 00:03:09,860
underestimated it at the very outset

60
00:03:15,830 --> 00:03:12,780
just one or two examples if you would

61
00:03:18,710 --> 00:03:15,840
like to know originally they estimated

62
00:03:20,540 --> 00:03:18,720
the land acquisitions in the Central

63
00:03:23,870 --> 00:03:20,550

Valley would cost three hundred thirty

64

00:03:28,160 --> 00:03:23,880
million dollars roughly today it's

65

00:03:31,540 --> 00:03:28,170
budgeted is at 1.5 billion they

66

00:03:34,100 --> 00:03:31,550
originally estimated the environmental

67

00:03:36,920 --> 00:03:34,110
clearances for the entire project from

68

00:03:39,590 --> 00:03:36,930
LA to San Francisco would run a few

69

00:03:42,590 --> 00:03:39,600
hundred million two hundred to three

70

00:03:46,759 --> 00:03:42,600
hundred it's now over a billion so those

71

00:03:49,310 --> 00:03:46,769
are just two good examples of um how

72

00:03:53,180 --> 00:03:49,320
they didn't mismanage anything they just

73

00:03:56,350 --> 00:03:53,190
blew it on estimating what an acre of

74

00:03:59,210 --> 00:03:56,360
the richest farmland the most

75

00:04:02,390 --> 00:03:59,220
technologically advanced farmland in the

76

00:04:05,300 --> 00:04:02,400

world would cost and then the federal

77

00:04:08,240 --> 00:04:05,310

government jumped on board and provided

78

00:04:10,550 --> 00:04:08,250

additional funds how many billion has

79

00:04:14,030 --> 00:04:10,560

the federal government provided the

80

00:04:17,750 --> 00:04:14,040

Obama administration provided two grants

81

00:04:20,300 --> 00:04:17,760

for a total of 3.5 billion and is that

82

00:04:23,510 --> 00:04:20,310

it or is there more coming federally no

83

00:04:24,860 --> 00:04:23,520

that's it so you know that's the other

84

00:04:26,430 --> 00:04:24,870

question is what analysis did the

85

00:04:34,710 --> 00:04:26,440

federal government do

86

00:04:40,470 --> 00:04:34,720

before writing those checks well clearly

87

00:04:43,410 --> 00:04:40,480

not enough the federal government the

88

00:04:45,530 --> 00:04:43,420

Department of Transportation and within

89

00:04:48,960 --> 00:04:45,540

it the Federal Railroad Administration

90

00:04:52,200 --> 00:04:48,970

we're advocating for high-speed rail in

91

00:04:56,550 --> 00:04:52,210

the country and their work programs in

92

00:04:58,890 --> 00:04:56,560

Texas in Florida that receive grants and

93

00:05:02,160 --> 00:04:58,900

and as those two states looked more

94

00:05:03,960 --> 00:05:02,170

closely at the project they backed out

95

00:05:05,580 --> 00:05:03,970

and they gave the money back they said

96

00:05:07,650 --> 00:05:05,590

we don't want it we're not gonna go

97

00:05:10,740 --> 00:05:07,660

forward with it and the Obama

98

00:05:12,840 --> 00:05:10,750

administration redirected some of that

99

00:05:17,640 --> 00:05:12,850

money to California so it got a little

100

00:05:19,560 --> 00:05:17,650

bonus from Texas and Florida yeah these

101
00:05:21,030 --> 00:05:19,570
were the so-called shovel-ready projects

102
00:05:23,070 --> 00:05:21,040
that were gonna help get us out of the

103
00:05:25,620 --> 00:05:23,080
recession correct that's right

104
00:05:28,260 --> 00:05:25,630
yeah and I think the Florida train was

105
00:05:28,770 --> 00:05:28,270
gonna go from Tampa to Orlando that's

106
00:05:31,770 --> 00:05:28,780
right

107
00:05:33,660 --> 00:05:31,780
and Florida analyzed it and said thank

108
00:05:35,790 --> 00:05:33,670
you federal government but we're not

109
00:05:39,560 --> 00:05:35,800
interested in the money interesting only

110
00:05:43,260 --> 00:05:39,570
enough there is a fully privatized

111
00:05:46,170 --> 00:05:43,270
medium speed rail that's being built and

112
00:05:51,360 --> 00:05:46,180
partially operating between Miami and

113
00:05:54,990 --> 00:05:51,370

Orlando and that's being developed with

114

00:05:58,290 --> 00:05:55,000

no state or federal money it's been

115

00:06:02,010 --> 00:05:58,300

operated about 110 miles an hour they

116

00:06:04,380 --> 00:06:02,020

decided that speed was adequate to draw

117

00:06:08,400 --> 00:06:04,390

people off the road if they keep the

118

00:06:10,170 --> 00:06:08,410

fares low if you wanted to get from LA

119

00:06:11,120 --> 00:06:10,180

to San Francisco by train right now can

120

00:06:14,190 --> 00:06:11,130

you do it

121

00:06:17,670 --> 00:06:14,200

yeah with great little difficulty that's

122

00:06:19,650 --> 00:06:17,680

one of the problems I mean clearly we

123

00:06:22,830 --> 00:06:19,660

could have better passenger rail in this

124

00:06:26,850 --> 00:06:22,840

state because people some percentage of

125

00:06:30,659 --> 00:06:26,860

people would rather ride the rails right

126
00:06:34,320 --> 00:06:30,669
now it would take you somewhere north of

127
00:06:36,750 --> 00:06:34,330
8 hours to get from LA to the Bay Area

128
00:06:40,050 --> 00:06:36,760
you'd have to take a bus from Union

129
00:06:42,659 --> 00:06:40,060
Station to Bakersfield over the

130
00:06:46,050 --> 00:06:42,669
Mountains and then you might have to do

131
00:06:48,870 --> 00:06:46,060
another bus link at some point um so

132
00:06:51,990 --> 00:06:48,880
it's uncompetitive nobody wants to spend

133
00:06:53,610 --> 00:06:52,000
eight hours to get to San Francisco so

134
00:06:57,300 --> 00:06:53,620
perhaps one of the most questionable

135
00:07:00,600 --> 00:06:57,310
decisions was to begin work on this

136
00:07:03,120 --> 00:07:00,610
without the whole thing without all the

137
00:07:05,040 --> 00:07:03,130
land being acquired without having the

138
00:07:07,140 --> 00:07:05,050

full plan so exactly how they're gonna

139

00:07:10,250 --> 00:07:07,150

implement the whole thing they began

140

00:07:12,690 --> 00:07:10,260

building what a couple years ago you

141

00:07:14,400 --> 00:07:12,700

know one of the miss management's

142

00:07:18,480 --> 00:07:14,410

remember we talked about things that

143

00:07:20,430 --> 00:07:18,490

they just underestimated at the outset

144

00:07:22,650 --> 00:07:20,440

they didn't have to mismanage anything

145

00:07:25,500 --> 00:07:22,660

but one of the things they did mismanage

146

00:07:28,620 --> 00:07:25,510

was issuing the initial contract for

147

00:07:31,740 --> 00:07:28,630

constructing 29 miles of rail before

148

00:07:34,110 --> 00:07:31,750

they had a single acre a single half

149

00:07:39,390 --> 00:07:34,120

acre or a single foot square foot of

150

00:07:41,640 --> 00:07:39,400

land in hand so that contract was issued

151
00:07:44,300 --> 00:07:41,650
and then the contractor of course began

152
00:07:48,420 --> 00:07:44,310
acquiring heavy-duty equipment and

153
00:07:52,680 --> 00:07:48,430
offices and he just said idle for years

154
00:07:55,140 --> 00:07:52,690
and that became a a very big source of

155
00:07:58,500 --> 00:07:55,150
delay claims for them who is that

156
00:08:01,250 --> 00:07:58,510
contractor that's a team led by Tudor

157
00:08:05,580 --> 00:08:01,260
Perini and where are those guys out of

158
00:08:09,659 --> 00:08:05,590
zomom Sylmar yes so they're in

159
00:08:11,730 --> 00:08:09,669
California yes and this is a company

160
00:08:15,740 --> 00:08:11,740
that's built high speed rail before no

161
00:08:21,150 --> 00:08:15,750
they've built highways structures and

162
00:08:24,240 --> 00:08:21,160
tunnels and public infrastructure you

163
00:08:26,370 --> 00:08:24,250

know what they're building isn't won't

164

00:08:30,110 --> 00:08:26,380

have a rail on it they're building

165

00:08:32,640 --> 00:08:30,120

bridges and viaducts and grade and

166

00:08:35,699 --> 00:08:32,650

trenches which is you know pretty

167

00:08:39,570 --> 00:08:35,709

typical of transportation infrastructure

168

00:08:42,209 --> 00:08:39,580

a later contractor will come in and

169

00:08:44,240 --> 00:08:42,219

install track and signals and

170

00:08:47,280 --> 00:08:44,250

electrification

171

00:08:48,990 --> 00:08:47,290

that's the plan anyways in am i right

172

00:08:51,870 --> 00:08:49,000

that that got approved that initial

173

00:08:54,100 --> 00:08:51,880

twenty seven mile stretch because they

174

00:08:56,290 --> 00:08:54,110

needed to commence construction

175

00:09:01,210 --> 00:08:56,300

by a certain deadline to get the federal

176

00:09:04,060 --> 00:09:01,220

money that's what they said correct they

177

00:09:06,930 --> 00:09:04,070

said we need were pressed to get the

178

00:09:10,600 --> 00:09:06,940

contract issued so that we can meet the

179

00:09:11,950 --> 00:09:10,610

requirements of the grants well but the

180

00:09:14,290 --> 00:09:11,960

grants re are only three and a half

181

00:09:16,480 --> 00:09:14,300

million three and half billion yes and I

182

00:09:18,730 --> 00:09:16,490

say only but it's a lot of money but the

183

00:09:22,030 --> 00:09:18,740

total project cost at this point is 77

184

00:09:24,580 --> 00:09:22,040

billion and there were a number of

185

00:09:27,550 --> 00:09:24,590

senators including Democrats who said in

186

00:09:30,460 --> 00:09:27,560

the long run this three billion will not

187

00:09:33,670 --> 00:09:30,470

be a reason to jump ahead on this

188

00:09:35,380 --> 00:09:33,680

project the way we are let's let's

189

00:09:37,660 --> 00:09:35,390

proceed with the project and the

190

00:09:40,810 --> 00:09:37,670

planning in a rational way and not try

191

00:09:42,640 --> 00:09:40,820

to rush this because we want three

192

00:09:46,480 --> 00:09:42,650

billion in in the long run that won't

193

00:09:47,800 --> 00:09:46,490

matter and that was exactly right and

194

00:09:48,850 --> 00:09:47,810

then I also go back to the federal

195

00:09:50,230 --> 00:09:48,860

government though and you just wonder

196

00:09:51,970 --> 00:09:50,240

what kind of checks the federal

197

00:09:54,190 --> 00:09:51,980

government has why didn't they see right

198

00:09:56,380 --> 00:09:54,200

through this to see wait a minute you

199

00:09:57,550 --> 00:09:56,390

guys aren't ready to begin building this

200

00:10:01,570 --> 00:09:57,560

thing we're not going to give you this

201

00:10:03,100 --> 00:10:01,580

three and a half billion dollars I don't

202

00:10:04,900 --> 00:10:03,110

know who it is in the federal government

203

00:10:08,380 --> 00:10:04,910

that makes that the head of the

204

00:10:11,380 --> 00:10:08,390

department transportation yeah there was

205

00:10:15,340 --> 00:10:11,390

actually a Republican who was a head of

206

00:10:18,010 --> 00:10:15,350

the Department of Transportation he was

207

00:10:21,040 --> 00:10:18,020

formerly a member of Congress them and

208

00:10:25,480 --> 00:10:21,050

he backed it and the Federal Railroad

209

00:10:30,580 --> 00:10:25,490

Administration officials were Democratic

210

00:10:31,840 --> 00:10:30,590

appointees backed it and there was you

211

00:10:34,600 --> 00:10:31,850

can second-guess that and say well

212

00:10:37,180 --> 00:10:34,610

obviously they didn't do the homework to

213

00:10:39,790 --> 00:10:37,190

look and see how ready the state was but

214

00:10:41,800 --> 00:10:39,800

it is a big state and we do build a

215

00:10:44,140 --> 00:10:41,810

lot of infrastructure here and we have

216

00:10:48,700 --> 00:10:44,150

them successful in them in the distant

217

00:10:50,860 --> 00:10:48,710

past so is it fair to say that

218

00:10:52,990 --> 00:10:50,870

California was embarking on the most

219

00:10:54,370 --> 00:10:53,000

expensive transportation project in the

220

00:10:57,280 --> 00:10:54,380

history of American transportation

221

00:11:00,520 --> 00:10:57,290

projects well if you call it one project

222

00:11:02,740 --> 00:11:00,530

yes it clearly wasn't as expensive as

223

00:11:06,040 --> 00:11:02,750

the interstate freeway system that's

224

00:11:07,269 --> 00:11:06,050

more than one project right certainly

225

00:11:13,569 --> 00:11:07,279

more expensive

226

00:11:15,429 --> 00:11:13,579

than anything I can think of as clearly

227

00:11:17,800 --> 00:11:15,439

the most expensive infrastructure

228

00:11:20,379 --> 00:11:17,810

project of any kind in the state's

229

00:11:24,810 --> 00:11:20,389

history it's far bigger than the state