

## **Berman Jacqueline**

### **"Charley On The Mta"**

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COMMENTS: Written by Jacqueline Berman (now Steiner) and

Bess Hawes as a campaign song for Walter F. O'Brian, the

Communist Party candidate in Boston's mayoral election. When

Will Holt recorded the number as a pop song for Coral, the record company was astounded by a deluge of protests from

Boston because the song made a hero out of a local "radical".

The record was hastily withdrawn and a new version recorded which

eliminated O'Brien's claim to musical fame. In the later

Kingston Trio release, Walter F. was changed to George to avoid

advertising Commies on the air.

Let me tell you the story of a man named Charley

On a tragic and fateful day

He put ten cents in his pocket, kissed his wife and family

Went to ride on the MTA

CHORUS: Did he ever return? No, he never returned,

And his fate is still unlearn'd.

He may ride forever 'neath the streets of Boston

He's the man who never returned.

Charley handed in his dime at the Kendall Square  
Station

And he changed for Jamaica Plain

When he got there the conductor told him, "One more  
nickel."

Charley could not get off that train.

Now all night long Charley rides through the tunnels

Saying, "What will become of me?

How can I afford to see my sister in Chelsea

Or my cousin in Roxbury?"

Charley's wife goes down to the Scollay Square station

Every day at quarter past two

And through the open window she hands Charley a  
sandwich

As the train comes rumblin' through.

Now you citizens of Boston, don't you think it's a  
scandal

That the people have to pay and pay

Vote for George O'Brien and fight the fare increase

Get poor Charley off the MTA

CHORUS: Or else he'll never return, no he'll never  
return

And his fate will be unlearned.

He may ride forever 'neath the streets of Boston.

He's the man (Who's the man) He's the man (Oh, the  
man)

He's the man who never returned

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