



US lawmakers wowed by Japan's bullet trains 美國議員盛讚日本子彈列車

US lawmakers voiced awe last week at taking a ride on Japan's **sleek** bullet trains, with one congressman saying he felt like he was in a videogame.

At a congressional hearing, Representative Don Manzullo said he took the ultra-fast train from the central city of Nagoya, where he visited Toyota Motor Corp and other companies, to Tokyo.

"I got to sit right up in front," the Illinois Republican said of his trip two years ago.

"It was almost like a videogame," he added. "You have to try that sometime."

Eni Faleomavaega, who heads the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee on Asia, contrasted Japan's trains with the US' own troubled network.

"The fact of the matter is Japan is about 100 years in advance as far as mass transit system compared with ours," said Faleomavaega, a Democrat who represents American Samoa.

"They were able to have trains that can go up to speeds of 125 miles (200km) an hour some 50 years ago. And what are we doing?"

But Representative Ed Royce, a Republican from car-loving southern California, **begged to differ**, saying that public transport was "very rational" for Japan but not necessarily for the US.

"Japan's population, its density, its geography, make it entirely different when discussing public transportation than with respect to the United States," Royce said.

"We look at economic **merit** when addressing infrastructure."

President Barack Obama in January unveiled US\$8 billion in economic **stimulus** money aimed at building high-speed rail networks in the US. (AFP)

美國國會議員上週盛讚搭乘日本流線型子彈列車的經驗，有位議員還表示，整個人宛若置身電玩遊戲之中。

眾議員唐恩·曼祖羅在眾院聽證會上表示，他到日本中部名古屋市拜訪豐田汽車和其他公司，順道搭乘高速列車前往東京。

這位伊利諾州共和黨眾議員說起兩年前這趟日本行時表示：「當時我坐在最前面。」

他還說：「整個就像一場電玩遊戲。有機會你們一定要試試。」

美國聯邦眾議院外交委員會亞太小組主席恩尼·法雷歐馬維加，拿日本列車和問題重重的美國鐵路網來對比。

身為薩摩亞裔民主黨員的法雷歐馬維加說：「事實上，日本在大眾運輸系統方面領先我們一百年左右。」

「他們大概五十年前就能打造出時速達一百二十五英里（兩百公里）的列車了。我們呢？」

愛德·羅艾斯眾議員則不以為然地表示，大眾運輸對日本來說是「極為明智」的選擇，但在美國並非絕對必要。羅艾斯是南加州共和黨議員，當地人偏好自行開車。

羅艾斯說：「日本的人口數、人口密度及地理環境和美國截然不同，在討論大眾運輸議題時，自然不可等同視之。」

「處理基礎建設問題時，我們考量的是經濟價值。」

巴拉克·歐巴馬總統一月時宣布，要從經濟振興基金中提撥八十億美元興建美國高鐵網絡。 (法新社/翻譯：林倩如)

A file photo provided by Japan Railway and released on Nov. 28, 1997 shows the 500 series Shinkansen bullet train near Tokyo. PHOTO: AFP

這張由日本鐵道公司提供、一九九七年十一月二十八日發佈的資料照中，一輛新幹線500型列車行經東京附近。 照片：法新社

TODAY'S WORDS 今日單字

1. sleek /slik/ adj.

線條流暢的 (xian4 tiao2 liu2 chang4 de5)

例：The apartment was decked out with sleek modern furniture. (公寓套房佈置了流線造型的現代家具。)

2. merit /'merit/ n.

價值 (jia4 zhi2) · 優點 (you1 dian3)

例：Despite having little artistic merit, the movie did very well at the box office. (這部電影雖然缺乏藝術性，但票房奇佳。)

3. stimulus /'stimjələs/ n.

刺激 (ci4 ji1)

例：The treasury's fiscal stimulus package is intended to revitalize the economy. (財政部的財政刺激方案目的在振興經濟。)

LANGUAGE POINT 重要片語

beg to differ 不以為然

If you **beg to differ** with someone, you disagree with them. According to the article, Ed Royce **begged to differ** with the idea that the US should copy Japan's transport system.

Example: "I'm afraid I must **beg to differ** because I don't think your proposal will work."

「beg to differ」表示不認同。上文中提到，愛德·羅艾斯並不認同美國該仿效日本運輸系統的看法。

例如：「很抱歉得潑你冷水，因為我不認為你的提議行得通。」