

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Erie Railroad Project

Work Experience

O. H. 281

KENNETH BRICKLEY

Interviewed

by

Julie DiSibio

on

June 8, 1980

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INTERVIEWEE: KENNETH BRICKLEY
INTERVIEWER: Julie DiSibio
SUBJECT: Erie Railroad, Work Experience
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D: This is an interview for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program with Mr. Kenneth Brickley on June 8, 1980 at 1:20 p. m. The subject is the History of the Erie Railroad.

Okay, first of all Mr. Brickley, do you want to give me some information about your background, such as your childhood, members of your family, something about your schooling and your life as a youngster?

B: I was born on July 2, 1930 in Bluffton, Indiana, and at that time for about one year we lived in Bluffton. After that, after a one-year period, we moved to the country about three miles from Bluffton. The main reason for moving was my father's vocation which at that time was a cattle buyer. He bought and sold cattle and he also did some farm work. I was one of seven children. I have three brothers and three sisters. My oldest brother's name was Carl. He lived in Bluffton, Indiana. My next brother was Donald. He lived in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. My third brother was Leslie, and he lived in Ossian, Indiana. My sisters were Mabel, she lived in Huntington, Indiana, a sister, Toby, who lived in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and a sister, Vendetta, who lived in Ohio.

After moving to the country, I spent my early years as most other farm children would, helping with the chores and the household duties that had to be done on a farm. We were considered, I would say, a poor-income family. My father died when I was five years old. I remained

as the youngest of the children, with my mother, who raised me. My brothers and sisters were all much older than I was, and they had all left home and gotten married, and went to various locations throughout the country.

When I started school at Lancaster, which is a county school in Wells County in the state of Indiana, at that particular time, there was no kindergarten so you started right in the first grade. I went all of my elementary school and junior high at that school. When I was six weeks into my freshman year, we moved from the farm to Huntington, Indiana. The reason for the move was that my mother had had at that period of time, two strokes, and she was no longer able to maintain a home as such. Being that I was still in school and having no income of my own, we couldn't first of all manage the home, nor could we afford to maintain the home.

So we moved in with my oldest sister, Mabel, and there I entered Huntington High School and completed my high school days there. Before moving to Huntington, I had been very active in sports. I liked it very much but due to income, et cetera, I was forced to drop sports and maintain various jobs in order to help the family, both my sister and my mother with an income, and further my own education.

At that particular time, out of seven kids, I was the only one to complete and graduate from high school, which I felt, at that period of time was quite an accomplishment. At the point of my grade school life, especially grade school and junior high, we were in and coming out of the Depression, which was a very hard, tough time for everyone. In fact, my mother and I, after the kids left home and because of the restricted income, we were on welfare. At that time, rather than money, you got food, various types of food.

After I graduated from high school--like I say, I worked various jobs. The first one I had was with a dry cleaning concern just as a cleanup boy and so on. I've worked for furniture factories, two different kinds. I've worked for an asbestos company that made brake linings and clutch facings. I've worked for a construction company that did work on sidewalks, driveways, et cetera. I also worked for F. W. Woolworths. I worked for a theater chain in Huntington; they had three theaters. My senior year I was what they called a house manager, which was responsible for the ushers, the concessions, the selling of tickets, et cetera.

After graduating from high school, I went to work for a company called Kitchen Maid, which was a woodworking company that made kitchen cabinets, various wooden accessories for the home. It was at that time that I applied in late 1950 for an apprenticeship on the railroad. After waiting until January 8, of 1951. I was finally called to come into work. I did not qualify for the apprenticeship because on the Erie Railroad at that time, when you served an apprenticeship, they had first consideration for family of present employees. Since there was another young fellow about my age whose father was with the railroad, he was considered before I was.

When I started, I started as a carman-helper. Now a carman-helper in the car department, at that time, the job was to repair and maintain freight and passenger cars and also you were responsible for helping clear up derailments and wrecks of all different types. I worked that job for one year. Then I was notified that I had qualified for the apprenticeship and they had an opening. I then transferred from carman-helper to the apprenticeship, which was a four-year course.

Now the apprenticeship consisted of your practical everyday work in the shop, plus it included a course from which we had to do two lessons a month; and they were sent in to Omaha, Nebraska and were graded. You had to maintain passing marks, both in that type work, plus your practical work had to be satisfactory. At any time that your work was not satisfactory as far as the schooling was concerned, you were taken out of service until such time as you got your grades up to where they should be.

I completed the apprenticeship after four years and I had a grade average of 98. During the apprenticeship I went to various places. Now this was for specialized training. At that time I went to our major car shop. Now this is a shop that builds or rebuilds cars right from the ground, and it was located at Dunmore, Pennsylvania. I spent about three months in that shop. There you worked various locations of the production line, which included welding, the construction of the car body itself, the air brake work, the safety appliance work, everything that goes in to the building or rebuilding of a car.

After I completed that phase, I was transferred to Hoboken, New Jersey; and there I got training in passenger car maintenance, air brake, plus import-export inspecting. We shipped a lot of shipments of various

commodities overseas, . . . we also inspected inbound commodities from other countries. There you had to make sure that the loading of these cars was sufficient to safely move the cars over the railroads to whatever destination there was.

After I completed my apprenticeship, I bid on a job on the repair track in Huntington as a carman. Now when you bid in a job, it is specified what your duties are. There are some jobs that are primarily burning and welding, there are jobs which are primarily air brake work, and there are general carman jobs.

- D: Okay. Before we go any further, this apprentice program that you were in, did the majority or didn't the majority of young men entering the railroad go into an apprentice program?
- B: No. They screened and canvassed candidates. First of all, your age had to be with you. You had to be comparatively young and you had to show through the various tests that they gave you, that you had an aptitude for supervision. The idea of the apprenticeship was to not only train carman as such in a craft, but it was also, hopefully, to be able to pick supervision from those apprentices.
- D: Did they have this same apprenticeship program for other crafts besides the carman?
- B: Yes, they did. They had them for electricians, they had them for machinists, et cetera. Okay. After I had completed my apprenticeship and I went to work as a carman, one of my side duties or joint duties was the wreck train. Now a wreck train is a group of cars, a tool car, a dining car, the wreck derrick itself, which is on rails. You go out to derailment sites, wreck sites, and you clear the right-of-way, you re-rail the cars or load them up. At that time we had a hundred-ton steam derrick. Now there were two men that took care of that. One was called a derrick engineer and one was his fireman.
- D: Why was this a steam derrick if diesel engines were in?
- B: Diesel engines were just being introduced, and at our location in Huntington, Indiana, we had not yet progressed to the point where we had diesel derricks. We had steam derricks.
- D: You did have diesel engines?

B: Oh, yes. Now, Huntington at one time was a very good-sized car shop, and also locomotive terminal. As the years went by, of course, it was like everything else. It began to diminish in numbers. Diesels came in, which cut back drastically on the work force in the roundhouse as they used to call them then for the old steam engines. By the same token, new sites were located for your more major car shops and therefore it was diminished there.

Now after I had worked that job, I worked all phases of carman's work. There are a lot of different things involved in the car department. At that time--and I'm sure that it's true today--the one department that is governed by more regulations than any other department on the railroad is the car department, because we deal in interchange. This means we are accepting and offering cars to foreign railroads, as we call them. That's any railroad other than our own. We must know that these cars are safe when we accept them because once a car is pulled from an interchange track, we, the receiving railroad, assume the responsibility for that car.

D: Now would these be company regulations or state or federal regulations?

B: They're federal regulations. You must do interchange work, and you're responsible for open-top loading. You have to see that commodities are properly secured on flat and gondola cars before they go to the destination. You have to be aware of what we call "safety appliances," which are your appliances that the men themselves, your switch crews and your train crews, work around and ride on, such as your sill steps, your ladders, so on and so forth. You have to be qualified in air brake work, you have to be qualified in burning and welding.

At that time, we had to pass welding tests because we were welding foreign cars. Therefore, in order to charge that company, it had to be done by a qualified welder.

I think I should add that the job that I've been explaining was a job that I had on the repair track. Now there we did all types of repair work. We changed wheels on cars, we did periodic work on the cars, including air brakes. We had a program at that time in Indiana, upgrading boxcars for grain loading at elevators. You had to have a lot of boxcars available. Also at that period of time, most of your boxcars were forty foot

long. They're much longer, and much bigger now. We did a lot of woodwork inside them--lining the floors, and furring strips, so that you could secure the grain inside the car.

Now, like all union jobs, when vacancies were available, you were allowed to bid on them and you were awarded the jobs according to your seniority, strict seniority.

D: Since you brought up the topic of unions, what was the union that you belonged to at this point?

B: Brotherhood of Railway Carmen of America and Canada.

D: What was your impression of the union at this point? Was it a closed shop, were you forced to join the union?

B: When I first joined the union, it was not a closed shop. It was a voluntary thing. It later became a closed shop and it was mandatory that you belonged. My impression of the union at that time was that it was a good thing. It assured the employee that he had some semblance of protection. Before that time, personalities entered into it and if a boss or a supervisor that you had didn't particularly like you or had any sort of a grudge whatsoever, he could just dismiss you and that was the end of your career right there.

Another thing, the unions brought better working conditions, they brought the forty-hour work week, which up until that time we had not experienced.

So, I then bid a job as trainyard inspector. An inspector is responsible for inspecting the cars to see that they are safe to move over the railroad. Their main concern is to make sure that the wheels and trucks are good, that the air brakes are operative, that the cars have hand brakes that are operative, that the safety appliances which are the ladders, sill steps and ladder treads are safe. You do what we called air tests. Once a train is made up with your consist of cars, your caboose, your locomotive, you then make an air test which means that you supply all of those cars with the proper amount of air. You then set the air brakes to make sure that your brake shoes come up against all your wheels and that you have an efficient braking system. Now you must maintain an 85 percent braking equivalency.

Once this was done, we gave the okay and the trains would move out of town. An inspector is also respon-

sible for accepting the cars off of interchanges from various railroads. That's part of your work. Part of your work is also measuring the high and wide loads that move in these open-top cars, the 'gons' and the flats because each railroad has certain clearances. They have height clearances and they have width clearances. So you must know that the load that you have loaded can safely go without hitting a bridge or some kind of an obstruction. I worked those jobs along with the wrecking, and by that time I had assumed the responsibility of the derrick engineer, which you were then responsible to operate this steam-operated derrick in picking up cars and clearing wrecks.

October the 8th of 1961, I was promoted to relief train-yard foreman and was transferred to Hammond, Indiana. This was a big step for me because it was my first opportunity to work as a foreman--and by the way, at that time, those jobs were not unionized. We worked six days a week. They could call you out any time that you were not on duty and it was no extra money. You had no particular benefits other than your hospitalization, et cetera. I worked that job, it was a swing job. My responsibilities entailed the repair track to see that the proper repairs were made and to write the bills up on the cars. It also included a certain amount of days out in the trainyard. In Hammond we interchanged several cars from foreign railroads, and of course, the Erie Railroad ran from Chicago to New York. This was an originating point from the west going east. Many cars from 55th Street, Chicago, would come to Hammond and then we would make up the trains there, plus we had interchange deliveries from Indiana Harbor Belt, Belt Railway Company, Monon, Rock Island. There were a lot of different interchanges. It was a very busy operation.

I was on that job until August 1, 1965. At that time, I was offered a promotion as general foreman, car and locomotive, and was transferred to Salamanca, New York. I might say that right at this period of time, the unions were organizing the foremen. I believe probably the main reason that the unions were able to organize the foremen was because they had been mistreated in the past by the company. They had been taken advantage of, hours meant nothing, working conditions meant nothing. There were always promises made and never kept. Therefore, an organization by the name of American Railway Supervisors of America organized the unions.

Just at the point when I was being transferred from Hammond to Salamanca, I was a charter member. After I

got to Salamanca, I assumed the duties and territory of that particular job. For the first time, I was not only involved in the car department, which I had been trained in, but I was also involved in locomotives. By this time it was all diesel. Therefore, I had to do a lot of studying on my own, I had to work with people who were experienced in diesels in order to be able to troubleshoot problems on locomotives, know what their safety regulations were and how to maintain them properly.

I had a good-sized territory in New York State. It ran from Niobe Junction, which is just west of Jamestown, New York, all the way to Hornell, New York, and a branch line that ran from Waterboro, New York, to Dunkirk, New York. Plus, I had a branch line that ran from Salamanca, New York, to Bradford, Pennsylvania. Needless to say, my territory was big and at that time we didn't have many men in our craft to do the work, and you had to assume all the jobs. You were your own clerk because you had no clerk. You were your own storekeeper, which meant you had to order your own material because you had no storekeeper. You also were your own wreckmaster because you had no wreckmaster. Plus, you had to supervise the whole operation, as far as wrecking, and so on.

At that time, we still had passenger trains running on the Erie and we did a lot of fueling. Salamanca, New York was one of the main fueling points both for freight and for passenger. I think I should mention too, that right before this time, before my transfer to Salamanca, we merged with the DL & W. Now there's a lot of different versions and probably if you talk to different people, everybody would have a different answer, depending on where they stood at that time, what job they had, what location they were in, or what railroad they came from.

As far as I was concerned, it was the beginning of the end for the Erie Lackawanna, because in equipment alone we obtained a lot of decrepit equipment from the DL & W. The freight cars had pretty well deteriorated, the trackage had not been maintained properly. The locomotives were in bad need of repair, so there went many dollars trying to upgrade that equipment, to get it back into shape.

I was not personally affected by the merger as such because the merger went on further east of where I was at Salamanca, New York, so the people who had real problems were those people who were trying to work with both Erie

and DL&W, merge them in a harmonious way and try to get production out of them. I don't think some of them have yet merged, so to speak, because they still refer to themselves as strictly DL&W and others as strictly Erie.

After working that job at Salamanca, from August 1, 1965 until November 1, 1968, I was then promoted to general foreman car and transferred to Youngstown, Ohio.

D: Were you in a union at that point?

B: Oh, I probably should have explained that. When I was transferred to Salamanca from Hammond they were just in the process of organizing up to the rank of general foreman. When I first went to Salamanca, I was not union, but after I was there awhile, the unions and the company agreed that there were three of us that had so-called outlying general foremen jobs. One was in Huntington, Indiana, my job in Salamanca, and one more-- I can't remember the place--it was in Pennsylvania. At any rate, we were forced to join the union. Now the reason being we had direct supervision over the men. Any generals who had foremen under them were not union, but since we had no foremen under us and because we did personally give orders to the men, we were then forced to join.

After moving to Youngstown, at that time of course we still had passenger service. Youngstown was a very busy terminal at that time. We also maintained business cars that the president rode in, that the vice-president of the operation used, and that other top staff members of the system, located at Cleveland, Ohio, rode in. At that time I went there I believe we had about four business cars left, and these were fine cars. The interior was beautiful. They were all paneled with beautiful wood, most of it walnut. They had carpeting, they had draperies. They were really luxury cars. They had porters who attended them and they had their own chefs. All the cooking was done by charcoal. The silver that they used was elegant. It was a real sight to see a business car go on an inspection trip on the railroad.

My responsibility was to see that they were always in readiness and that they were maintained properly. I still had the responsibilities as in other places, like Salamanca, of seeing to it that we handled the wrecking, that we handled all phases of the interchange work, and I was responsible for setting up the supervision of the entire territory.

Now my territory ran at that point from a place called Amasa, Pennsylvania to Brady Lake, Ohio and we ran to Cleveland on the Cleveland branch. Plus that, we had a branch that ran to Lisbon and that was all part of my territory. Now of course, coming to Youngstown there were a lot of different people that worked for me. Some electricians came under me because of maintaining the business cars. It was the same way with the machinists, plus the carmen, plus the labor's craft, and now you see, I was not union. I went out of the union again, I got a leave of absence or a withdrawal card they call it, and that was because I did have again supervision between myself and the men. I was on that job right up until November 1, 1974. At that time I was promoted to master mechanic with headquarters still in Youngstown.

D: Downtown Youngstown?

B: No, Brier Hill. Now, from the time that I was appointed until the time that we actually went into the takeover or merger with Conrail, it was a very tough time. We were nearing the end--although we didn't know it at the time--thinking that things would get better and that Erie Lackawanna would remain as a separate railroad.

D: Now was the Erie in bankruptcy at that point?

B: No. Now things kept deteriorating, they kept getting worse, we kept deferring maintenance; material became harder and harder to get because we just didn't have the money to buy it. We began to cannibalize cars. By that I mean in order to keep better cars running, we would take parts off of other cars to repair them. Our hopes began to come up some when we were told that the Chessie System was very interested in us. Also at that time there was talk of Conrail, but we were not actually included in the Conrail package. We were led to believe that we were going to be taken over by Chessie. We had various inspection teams from the Chessie come in. We had to show them all of our territory, all of our operation. By the same token we had Conrail people the same way, or prospective Conrail people.

I think the main thing that kept us from the Chessie was that the Chessie would not take us with all of the union specifications that were laid down to them. In other words, they had to take all of our people, they would have to guarantee them jobs. Finally, it became evident that the Chessie just wasn't going to do that.

Then we were included in the Conrail package, with the other six bankrupt railroads, of which Penn Central was one, Reading, Lehigh Valley and so on.

Then on April 1, 1976 we became part of Conrail. Now again, my hopes were very high. I had no ill feelings, I had only feelings of gratitude because we had just gone through a very tough time and we were bankrupt. As you see many other companies in the United States when they go bankrupt, their men are out on the street no matter how many years of service and they have no reprieve. The reason I felt so good was because now we had the opportunity to take this, the seven bankrupt railroads, with financial loan money from the government and now we were going to make a go of it and we were going to build ourselves another railroad.

I remained at Youngstown, as master mechanic, with primarily the same territory that I described, and then it was explained to us that--you see, I was master mechanic on the former Mahoning Division, which was former Erie Lackawanna. We also had another master mechanic in town and he was former Penn Central and had the former Valley Division. It was explained to us by the general manager whose headquarters is in Pittsburgh of the Central Region, that we were going to merge these two divisions into one, and we were going to call it the Youngstown Division. Now when this takes place, both of you master mechanics will remain here until such time as there is an opening for one of you somewhere else.

Well, in the fall of 1977 we were both sent to Pittsburgh to be interviewed by the superintendent of the Pittsburgh Division because they had an opening for a master mechanic. For some reason I was chosen to be the master mechanic of the Pittsburgh Division. On December 19, 1977, I was transferred to Pittsburgh. Now there again, at this particular period of time, promotions were moving very slow and paperwork was moving even slower because they were trying to figure out in our system headquarters, which is Philadelphia, exactly what to do with some of these jobs. They were thinking of reorganizing some of the various jobs. I worked that job on the Pittsburgh Division until April 4, 1978. At that time, the man who had been left behind on the Youngstown Division was transferred to Philadelphia. I, again, was transferred then from the Pittsburgh Division back to the Youngstown Division because I knew over half of the territory. It was such a big one that they wanted someone back there that had an idea of the men, the union rules, the territory, and so on.

After I was transferred back to Youngstown--now you've got to understand that the Youngstown Division now has only been in existence four months. I was only in Pittsburgh four months. Therefore, since the paperwork had been held up I was lucky that I didn't have to sell my home in Youngstown and actually buy one in Pittsburgh. Although I was elated because I was coming back to home territory, I faced a job of now merging two former divisions--one Penn Central, and one E. L. This became quite a task in itself. I welcomed the challenge because it was something that had to be done and I felt it was something that I could do.

The territory is huge. It runs all the way from Bucyrus and Gallion, Ohio to Hornell, New York. It also runs north to Ashtabula, including the ore and coal operation all the way down to Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, which is only about twenty miles out of Pittsburgh. Now, I had, as I said, both Penn Central and E. L.

We have another union involved. The carmen--which I spoke about before--their union was the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen of America and Canada. Now we have a new union--it's not new but it was new to us--which is called TWU. That's the Transport Worker's Union. That's the union that was on the former Penn Central, for their carmen. We operate under that situation right now. Some of our locations such as Crestline, Canton, Ashtabula, have the TWU unions. Whereas places which were former E. L. like Meadville, Brier Hill, Akron, work under the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen. Now although we have unified contracts, which are Conrail contracts, still you get very deeply involved with prior rights, prior agreements, past practice, and so on.

Then also they introduced to us what they called basic budgets, which then developed into more dignified budgets. Never before had we had to worry on a local or a division basis about budgets. Now we were involved with money, with budgets, with managing our money; we had to stay within the budgets. We have now been given productivity with the introduction of computers. We now have to do a certain amount of car work in our shops per man, per day. We have to inspect so many cars per man, per day in the train yards. Still, our wrecking goes on. Well, it's a much more difficult job now than it used to be. We are more and more involved in paperwork and budget work.

D: Could you give me an idea of your impressions of railroading, how you feel about railroading as a career, and looking back on it, was it a good career for you? Would you suggest it for a young man starting out today?

B: Railroading for me has been a good life. It has been a tough life, but it has been a good life. It has afforded me the opportunity to advance, it has afforded me the opportunity of making a decent living for my family; my wife and I raised four children. I have been fortunate enough that in all of these years, which will soon be thirty years of service, I have never been laid off.

Now, the big differences that I see then as compared to now, when we were with the Erie, it was like a big family. You operated your railroad and you got criticized and you got disciplined for things that you might do wrong; but, still there was that feeling of togetherness, of everybody working together, everybody taking a pride in their work. The first year that I worked on the railroad we had the Centennial Train in 1951, which was, to me, breathtaking because I was brand new on the railroad, and here was a railroad showing off their latest equipment and their shiny new engines and their nice cars, and what their hopes and aspirations were for the future. We had various bands, the railroad had bands of which one of the best and the biggest came from Huntington, Indiana.

They had picnics annually. The employees, both supervision and union, met at Conneaut Lake, Pennsylvania. Each year they ran special trains, gathered up people all along the way and came in there for a full day of fun and all kinds of baseball games and gave awards, and it was just a nice time.

The feeling that I have now is that we have lost all of this family unity, this togetherness. It seems to be more and more every man for himself; it's more of a confused type of operation now than it was then. As far as a future for younger men, I still think there is a good future for young people in supervision on the railroads because I think that it is essential to our economy as a country; I think it's essential as far as being able to move war materials for national defense. I think it's the most economical way of transporting goods, especially in our day and age of watching fuel consumption, et cetera. I think it's the way to go, providing the government sees fit to release some of the restrictions so that tariffs can be set reasonable

enough to make money. A railroad is like any other business, you have to make money or you can't operate. Now I think it has been kind of a myth with the public in general that, "Well, here's this huge railroad and they've got lots of money so don't worry about it. We can just sock them any kind of taxes or any kind of restrictions that we want." This is one thing that has hindered the railroads a great deal.

I think that unions have gotten to the place, and I think now they're beginning to realize it, where they have put demands that have just almost financially broken the railroads. I don't know . . . when you compare eastern railroads with western railroads, there's an entirely different way to look at it. In the western railroads, your communities are not as thickly populated. They don't have the competition that we had. Santa Fe, and Southern Pacific, and Canadian National, and Burlington Northern--those railroads do not have that tremendous duplication of trackage and facilities that we have in the east. Therefore, competition in the east has just been brutal. Right now, our biggest rivals in the east are Norfolk and Western and Chessie System.

Now so far they are both profitable railroads. I think most of your western railroads are very profitable. They've been able to maintain their facilities, their trackage, their equipment whereas we have had to take seven bankrupt companies with run-down facilities, run-down track beds, and run-down equipment and try to bring this back up to an operating, competitive railroad. Conrail has made great strides. In the four years that we've operated, they've upgraded thousands of cars, they've bought a lot of new locomotives; they have rehabilitated thousands of miles of track, they have installed welded rail, they've gone very intensely into computer operation.

But, right now we're in--as the whole country is--in a recession. What everyone thought was just going to be a light recession has turned into a deep recession. Therefore, I have visions that we're going through the same thing that we did near the end of the Erie-Lackawanna Railroad--before we went into bankruptcy and before we were put into Conrail--and that is that we are now starting to defer maintenance on our trackage because of lack of funds; we are cutting back on the maintenance of freight car and locomotives for the same reason. Unless this trend changes, which right at this point, right at today's date, we can see no month in the near future where this is going to start to turn,

we are now about 42 percent down on our business, which is terrible.

In this area alone we've had steel mills closing, our automobile industries have been cut way back. Our ore loading for this time of year, which normally is booming, is now minimal. It doesn't look good. Right now it doesn't look good at all. We have had to lay off thousands of people and we're going to lay off a lot more. I have just recently cut back more forces, I've just closed a repair shop at Meadville; and we've gone to what we call a status-two shop, which is much lighter --it's only a four-man operation with a truck. Before we had a regular shop operation with eighteen, nineteen carmen and we had foremen and we had the facilities and the equipment to do the job. If this trend keeps up, I think we're going to be in deep trouble.

D: All right. As long as we're on the topic then of Conrail, do you think it would have been better for the federal government to have given money to the seven railroads individually rather than consolidate them into such a massive company?

B: Well, the regulatory agency, government agency that regulates and that controls really Conrail or set up the ground rules is called the U. S. R. A. They had various plans, they still have various plans. We're operating right now under what they call a five-year plan. We have one year left of this. Now because Conrail is so huge . . . we're the largest railroad in the world, and we have something like seventeen thousand miles of track and we cover seventeen states. It's too big. By the admission of our own chairman of the board, Mr. Jordan, he just recently said in a newspaper clipping in Philadelphia that he sees no way that Conrail can make it under the system, under the way that we're going right now.

Now, you ask would it have been better if they had financially backed each railroad individually, I say "No." The reason being: in the eastern quarter there are too many parallel tracks, too many comparable facilities in too short a distance. There again, the competition would eat you up.

It looks like what might happen, if we cannot reverse this trend and this economy does not pick up, it looks like they might go to another plan which would be maybe to sell off parts of the now existing Conrail system

to profitable railroads such as Chessie, N & W; and then maybe still run under Conrail a more reduced form of railroad.

D: What do you see in the future for railroads? Do you think that the future for them is bright or dismal?

B: I think the future is bright. I think we're going through a very tough time. I think some very strong action and some very definite plans have to be made. I think there are going to have to be some revisions to Conrail. I agree with Mr. Jordan with the idea that we're not going to make it as we're going now. As far as railroads in the future, they're vital to our country. I think that everyone is going to have to realize that and that railroads eventually will pick up, not as we know them now, but in a more unified form and more consolidated form, especially in the east. I'm talking from St. Louis-east. The western railroads, I think, basically are fairly sound and they can pretty much operate like they have been. But we have to have some changes in the east.

D: Do you think it would be beneficial to nationalize the railroads in this country like they have in such countries as Germany and Japan where their railroad systems are some of the finest in the world?

B: I would hate to see that happen. I don't really think that that's the answer. For instance, England tried it, and it didn't work there. It's a fiasco. If you notice they put the U. S. Post Office under government control and that has never been as good--now I'm talking [about] the service has not been as good. I think it's much healthier for the United States when companies can operate free of government control.

D: One final question: Will passenger service come back to the railroads, especially in the east, as it once was, or will railroads be primarily used for long hauls and for freight, in the future?

B: Well, they're experimenting now with some high-speed, turbojet type passenger equipment. I think passenger service will come back. I think as the trackage is upgraded--now like out east in New York State and in Jersey they're already running many commuter trains very successfully. I think to cut down on congestion of highways, with trucks and automobiles, that this is our answer, again for conservation of fuel. I think passenger service will come back.

BRICKLEY

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D: Okay. Is there anything that we didn't talk about that you'd like to add? Anything that I didn't cover?

B: I think you've pretty well got my history.

D: Okay, thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW