

Railroads Thirty Years Late Despite Age Of Automation

Editor's Note: The Cuban missile crisis last fall exposed such shocking defects in the nation's rail system that U.S. military men were worried today's railroads could not do the job in a major war. Even railway president Jervis Langdon of the Baltimore and Ohio admits that during the crisis "While we managed to get the cars that we were required by the military and we managed to get them by the time they were requested, it was not an easy job." Now a presidential emergency board is seeking to avert a nationwide rail strike in June over the bitter work rules controversy. This is the first of five reports by an experienced business reporter on what's wrong with America's ailing transportation giant and what's being done to fix it.

San Francisco to Chicago, from Washington to New York and at way points in between. Quill pens are unusual but antiquated accounting systems are

By RAY CROMLEY
Newspaper Enterprise Assn.

FAIRVIEW, Md. (NEA) — "When I took over as president a year ago," said young railroad president James M. Easter II, "I found the accounting done with a quill pen. They'd write in the job on one line in a ledger; then when it was paid, they'd cross out that line." "You found who owed you by looking back through the ledger and adding up the accounts that weren't crossed out." Easter installed electronic accounting equipment, put his records on tape. He retired two-thirds of his accounting department. "Now the Baltimore and Annapolis Railroad is a very small line to be sure. But it is an old one and its problems typify the problems of the once-vigorous industry which played such a major role in building the United States and preserving it through two World Wars." To learn these problems first-hand I talked to railroad presidents and railroad men from San

grain business, or lumber business, or cement business, or fresh meat and packing house business in one area or another. Sensational new microwave communications - computer combinations are available that would enable railroads to make better use of the freight cars they have, slash their investments for new cars by 20 per cent. But few railroads have these efficient new electronic systems.

Automatic ticket vendors would have wide use. But I've always had to stand in line myself.

The average railway has failed to get rid of deadwood among management and white collar workers as well as among the operating union workers. There's featherbedding all up and down the line from top to bottom. The result: railroad payrolls account for 67 per cent of rail operating expenses, compared to 32 per cent in manufacturing. Government sources foresee the strong possibility of a national railroad strike this year clinching the years long battle over whether management can drop the firemen it believes are featherbedding in diesel engines on freight runs and in yards. A recent Supreme Court decree threw the problem right back at management and the unions after a special presidential commission had recommended gradually dropping these firemen. Rail union officials deny the featherbedding charge; they also point to a 50 per cent decline in the number of railroad jobs during the postwar years from 1,400,000 to 700,000. Union men I talk to say the roads' big problem is that they don't go after new business with vigor that truckers and airlines do. Certainly most railroads have not matched their road and sky competition in pampering their customers—whether passengers or freight shippers. I took a train ride, on one of the nation's largest lines, just re-

cently. The train was late, slow, dirty, jerky, crowded. There was no steward or porter visible; a man rushed through taking tickets arguing with passengers. I took a plane back, the cost only a few dollars more. The trip took an eighth as long. There was an attractive stewardess. I was offered a magazine, coffee, a meal at no extra cost. The plane was clean, uncrowded.

Shippers make the same complaints—slow trains, jerky rides that damage their cargoes, lack of interest in special services. The truck lines are eager to give. I recently ordered a steel filing cabinet. It arrived damaged; so I turned it back. Then I ordered a wooden cupboard. It also came by train and I had to go to the station in a neighboring city to pick it up. It was damaged but I was discouraged and decided to repair it myself rather than go through the bother of sending it back. Then I ordered a storage shed. It arrived damaged and I returned it. A replacement that arrived several months later was also damaged and returned.

Nationwide figures indicate the annual loss as a result of breakdowns, delayed delivery and the costs of extra bracing and packaging on jerky railroads results in a new loss of \$200 million a year. Those extra costs mean higher prices for you. In 1930, the railroads hauled 75 per cent of intercity freight. This year they'll carry less than 40 per cent. In this gloomy situation, a few roads stand out. They are headed by imaginative, tough men. They are trying new ideas, buying new equipment, seeking ways to "pamper" passengers and shippers. Some are meeting the competition by joining it, making deals with truck lines or organizing their own truck pipe lines. But the antiquated, poorly managed railways are millstones



TWILIGHT ON THE ROAD — Which way to a new dawn? This question is answered in part by this new series starting today.

around the necks of these energetic roads. Because of through travel, the average railroad normally has less than half its own freight cars on its own road. If it builds modern, efficient cars, half are normally in use on other lines. "So why should I buy new, expensive cars," says one railroad president. "It costs me a lot of money; then I've got them only half the time. A good many of the cars I get from other roads are broken-down cars from inefficient lines." Union officials say such conditions often aren't necessary. They say the roads are really earning big profits, but hiding them in complicated inter-company balance sheets. They say the lines would be better off if they put their money into wages for employees and new equipment. But railroad managers insist their problem is dollars. They say profits have slipped to an average of 2½ per cent on investment. Many railroads are saddled with the past: heavy debts make it difficult to attract new money. They say they're taxed much higher than truck, barge and airlines. But most of all, they complain about government regulations. (Next: The Mishmash of Laws and Regulations.)

Peace Corps Tests Dated On April 27

The spring placement test for applicants interested in being considered for Peace Corps assignments will be held in Room 202 of the Post Office building on April 27, beginning at 8:30 a.m. General qualifications for Peace Corps projects include a minimum age of 18, U.S. citizenship, sound health, maturity, initiative and—above all—a desire to serve. Married couples are eligible in some projects if both qualify and they have no dependent children. Volunteers serve for two years, including training. They receive allowances to cover clothing, food, housing, medical care and incidentals, plus a readjustment allowance at the termination of their service of about \$1,800 based on \$75 for each month of service. Seven countries have asked the Peace Corps for volunteers who know how to operate and repair farm machinery. Especially needed are agricultural mechanics who can offer ingenuity and common sense along with their knowledge. Training will begin early this summer for Peace Corps projects in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Guinea, Malaysia, Pakistan and Senegal. All of these projects need volunteers with rural backgrounds who have had training and experience in maintaining farm equipment.

In Chile, for example, the volunteers will form a demonstration team to travel from one agricultural high school to another. They will be working not only with the students in these schools, but also with the farmers in neighboring communities. Similarly, in the other countries, the volunteers will teach machinery operation and maintenance to their co-workers at experimental stations and to local farmers through the extension service. Experience in a number of countries where volunteers already at work has shown that ingenuity is a "must" for Peace Corps mechanics. In most places there is a variety of machinery, and parts are difficult or impossible to obtain. Rather than face the long delay of ordering parts that must be imported, volunteers have found it helpful to be able to make them on the spot. Two volunteers in Pakistan have introduced regular schedules for lubricating and inspecting machinery to catch small defects early as a part of their efforts to teach preventive maintenance. Applications and information on these and other projects may be obtained from County Agent Beverly Bower in her office on the second floor of the Post Office building, or by writing Jim Gibson, Peace Corps, Division of Agricultural Affairs, Washington, 25, D.C.

"DENNIS THE MENACE"



MARGARET WANTS TO KNOW THE SIZE OF THAT BABY BIRD DENNIS FOUND. IS IT TEENY, TEENY-WEENY, OR TEENY-WEENY-EENY?

English Police Hunt Spy Pamphlet Authors

LONDON (UPI)—Police extended their hunt to the provinces Saturday for the authors of a "spies-for-peace" pamphlet which gave details of government plans for dispersal in the event of atomic war. The main scene of action was Keele University in the Midlands where 500 abridged copies of the "ban-the-bomb" leaflet were circulated at a conference of the National Union of Students. Detectives spent most of the morning taking statements from student delegates. But there was nothing to indicate they got any closer to the origins of the pamphlet than they did in earlier raids on homes in London. The police drive was aimed mainly at strengthening the position of Prime Minister Harold Macmillan when parliament meets on Tuesday after the Easter recess. Labor members have tabled eight questions on the pamphlet whose main effect lay in the political damage it can inflict on the Macmillan team. The police call on the student's conference stemmed from the admission of 19-year-old student Martin Lomey that he was responsible for printing and distributing abridged copies of the pamphlet. Lomey, head of the Bradford delegation at the conference, told police he picked up the original pamphlet during the Easter weekend "ban-the-bomb" march at which the pamphlet first appeared. Police seized several documents at the conference, but an inspector said: "We don't know whether there will be any further action."

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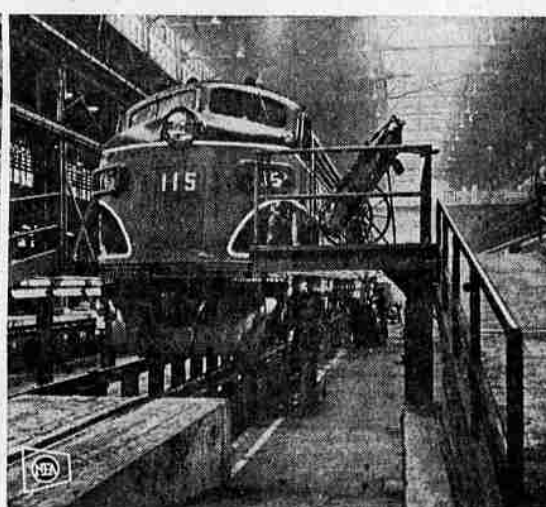
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MILITARY SHIPMENT — Railroads did an outstanding job in World War II, but with antiquated methods, their effectiveness is in doubt should there be another major war.



AUTOMATED CONTROL — This is a view of the interior of an automated freight yard control tower panel. Few railroads have these efficient electronic systems.



REPAIR SHOP — A view of a diesel engine in a repair shop. In some railroads over one fourth of the equipment is laid up for repairs.

40,000 Deaths Predicted From Smoke-Caused Lung Cancer

Should you smoke cigarettes? The American Cancer Society suggests that everyone know the facts about lung cancer before deciding. About 40,000 men and women in the United States will die of lung cancer this year, if the present trend continues, said Mrs. John Dickinson, publicity chairman of the local chapter of the Cancer Society. About 30,000 of the anticipated deaths would not occur if the victims had not started smoking cigarettes, the Klamath County Medical Society said further. Abstaining from cigarettes would also save the lives of additional thousands who will die this year of various types of cancer related to smoking, such as cancer of the lip, mouth, tongue, larynx and esophagus, the society disclosed. "There are about as many cancer deaths caused by cigarette smoking as there are deaths caused by automobile accidents," the Klamath County Medical Society said. For this reason, the American Cancer Society during its April educational and fund-raising

Crusade is stressing the health hazards of cigarette smoking. "If about 30,000 lives in the United States can be saved from lung cancer by not smoking cigarettes, it is the responsibility of the American Cancer Society to so inform the public," the Klamath County Medical Society said. "The public should know that cigarette smoking is also responsible for many of the lives lost each year to cancer of the mouth, tongue, lip, larynx, and esophagus," it was said. The Klamath County Medical Society pointed out that the American Cancer Society's main concern is to get the facts to the public about the hazards involved in cigarette smoking "so that the individual can make a realistic decision of whether to smoke or not to smoke."

The American Cancer Society is particularly active in its efforts to reach physicians and teenagers. Cited was a recent study which showed that at least one out of four physicians had given up cigarette smoking since 1954. Today three out of five physicians in the United States do not smoke cigarettes. In its educational effort among teenagers, the Klamath County Medical Society said, the American Cancer Society seeks to make clear to them the hazards in starting to smoke and the difficulties in breaking the smoking habit once it has been established. Already the American Cancer Society has reached more than half of the secondary schools in the country with the facts about smoking; its goal is to reach them all. The Klamath County Medical Society said that non-smoking men at the age of 35 have only a 23 per cent chance of dying before the age of 65. But with cigarette smokers, if you smoke one to two packs a day, you have a 38 per

cent chance of dying before age 65. If you smoke two or more packs a day, it is a 41 per cent chance. "The facts," said the Klamath County Medical Society, "adds up to the conclusion that lung cancer is a preventable disease which could almost be eliminated as a cause of death. The American Cancer Society believes it has a responsibility to do everything possible to reduce the alarming death rate from lung cancer which has increased over 900 per cent since 1932."

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