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# Rotten Engine, Not Propaganda Caused Wreck, Men Reply

Unsigned news report in the *Milwaukee Leader*, v. 11, no. 219 (Aug. 23, 1922), pg. 1.

CHICAGO — The ordinary double investigation was found to be quite insufficient in the case of the wreck of the “million dollar express” of the Michigan Central near Gary, Ind., in which two were killed.

And so a “triple investigation” was under way, according to newspaper reports.

Meanwhile, to keep the temperature up, several striking shopmen were arrested, although admittedly only for questioning.

Meanwhile also federal officials announced that exactly nothing of importance was found in the offices of William Z. Foster, which were invaded during Foster’s absence for “evidence.”

## Workers Make Reply.

Federal investigators asserted Foster was under close surveillance a long time and declared they would have known “if train wrecking was to have played a part in the program of Foster.”

Meanwhile again, railroad workers have come out with the declaration that it was not “radical propaganda,” but an unfit locomotive that caused the wreck. They characterized the accusation as a hastily patched-up explanation to place the blame for loss of life upon the striking shopmen instead of the railroad, where it belongs. J.F. McGrath, Vice President of the Railway Employees’ Department, American Federation of Labor, said the wreck did not differ a particle from wrecks reported each day from various parts of the country.

## Had Engine Trouble.

“It is reported that this very train had experienced engine trouble after it left Detroit,” he said.

McGrath’s statement followed the verdict of the coroner’s jury, which found that the engineer and fireman of the wrecked express came to their death “as a result of a plot to wreck the train.”

McGrath cited numerous derailments in various parts of the country to support his charges of the cause of crippled equipment by the railroads.

“Most of the wrecks reported are due to sharp flanges or defective breaks,” he added. “Sharp or broken flanges cause an engine to ride the rails. It is customary, when qualified inspectors are employed, for them to report such defects. The tires of the engine are then trued up or the car wheels replaced before the rolling stock is allowed to proceed.

## Wheels Not Replaced.

“But we have accurate reports from many roads showing that not 5 percent of the usual number of wheels have been replaced since July 1 [1922] and lack of inspection places the whole burden of rejected defective wheels on the train crew. The public has little conception of the debt it owes to the transportation men, who, at the risk of incurring the displeasure of their employers, have refused to take out defective engines and cars.

“No two reports as to the number of spikes ‘maliciously’ withdrawn, as the operators charge, agree. As a matter of fact it is agreed that a long section of track was torn up after the engine left the rails., This is a natural case. Drawn spikes and torn up tracks are regularly caused when a heavy engine rides the rails.”

*Edited by Tim Davenport.*

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