

A Glaring Omission by Rail Union Journal

By WM. Z. FOSTER

Speaking in the name of the Standard Railroad Labor Organizations, the national railroad journal, Labor, has for the past three weeks been publishing a list of those political candidates

for whom it recommends the million and a half railroad workers to vote. For the most part the list is made up of pro-Roosevelt forces, but there are also sins of omission and commission in the endorsements that would make one gasp with amazement did he not know the conservative top railroad union officialdom.

Most glaring of all is the failure to endorse President Roosevelt himself. Surely, from whatever angle the matter is looked at, whether from the broad standpoint of his being a powerful defender of the national interest in the war or of his being a good friend of the labor movement, Mr. Roosevelt is entitled to the fullest endorsement of the railroad unions. Moreover, a majority of the top leaders have pub-



licly favored Roosevelt's reelection and, of course, the rank and file of the railroad workers are overwhelmingly for him.

Yet Labor's list of endorsements blithely ignores him, just as though there were no Presidential election taking place whatever.

This political absurdity of trying to ignore the Presidential election while taking an active part in the many congressional elections, is in line with the reactionary policy of the AFL Executive Council. It has as its excuse the nonsensical argument that to support the Roosevelt-Truman ticket would make the labor movement a tail to the Democratic Party kite. Actually the policy is the result of the maneuvers of highly situated Republican labor leaders, and it works out to the benefit of Dewey.

Labor's list of recommendations for election to the Senate and House contains many names that are an insult to the patriotism and intelligence of the railroad workers.

Among those thus supported for the Senate are such people as James J. Davis (R. Pa.), Charles W. Tobey (R. NH) and Gerald P. Nye (R. ND), all of them notorious isolationists and enemies of the administration's all-out war program. La-

bor singles out for its special blessing Sen. Nye, whom it calls "an old friend" and says "Nye has done some great work in the Senate."

The list of recommendations for election to the House also is studded with isolationists and pro-fascists. Among various such who might be cited are M. J. Maas (R-Minn), a notorious red-baiter, William Lemke (R. ND), the stooge Presidential candidate of Father Coughlin in 1936, and, marvel of marvels, the noisome Hamilton Fish (R. NY).

By what standard was this list composed, so that these isolationists and anti-war elements found their way into it? The answer is because, instead of taking as the test for all candidates their war records, the compilers of the list, animated by the narrowest conceptions of Americanism and the trade unionism (with a goodly tincture of pro-Deweyism thrown in), took as their guide votes in Congress on labor legislation.

They ignored the fact that many reactionaries are able to maintain a so-called "good labor record" by the device of voting for labor when their votes have no decisive force. Thus they will vote for a labor law when there are already so many for

it, or so few, that their votes do not make any difference either way.

Obviously, when the railroad workers go to the polls on Nov. 7 they will need to revise Labor's list of recommendations radically. Their standard of judgment must not be singly whether a candidate voted for or against this or that labor measure, but how he has stood up in the great war crisis that our country has been passing through.

This is in accord with the reality that the best supporters of the war are also the best supporters of labor; for winning the war is the most fundamental interest of the workers. Moreover, those who are loyally backing up the war will also be found in nearly every case to be the most reliable friends of labor with regard to labor legislation, hours and wages, etc.

With such a measuring standard in mind, the railroad workers should do two things to Labor's list of candidates. First, they should add the names of Roosevelt and Truman to it and go all out for their election. And second, they should go over the list of recommendations with a fine-tooth comb and delouse it of all those reactionaries, isolationists and pro-fascists.