

Gompers and Dawes; Twin Supporters of Capitalist System

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

IN the Aug. 23 number of the American Federation of Labor "Weekly News Service," official organ of the arch-reactionary Gompers, appears the startling headline, "Dawes and Foster Join Hands to Defend Labor Injunction." What a tasty morsel, if true. But everyone, with the exception of Gompers' hopeless dupes, will see at once that the slander contained in this headline is only one more instance of the desperate and unscrupulous efforts of the Gompers machine to stay the progress of the left-wing movement by carrying on an organized campaign of libel and misrepresentation.

The headline is followed by a screed, accredited to a Chicago nobody by the name of Mr. Wise, inferring that in the recent judicial elections in Chicago I co-operated with General Dawes to secure the election of Dennis E. Sullivan, a notorious injunction judge. This is, of course, a lie out of whole cloth. The facts are these:

In the above-mentioned elections, which occurred about a year ago, John Fitzpatrick, fresh from his collapse at the Federated Farmer-Labor Party Convention of July 3-5, abandoned the policy of independent working class political action and had the Chicago Federation of Labor re-adopt the disastrous Gompers "non-partisan" policy by endorsing 10 judicial candidates on the republican and democratic tickets. This treason to the Labor Party idea was supposed to be for the purpose of defeating Judge Sullivan. But several of the candidates endorsed were themselves almost equally notorious as injunction judges. In this situation the Communist delegates to the Chicago Federation of Labor denounced Fitzpatrick for leading the workers back into the old party political shambles and demanded that the Federation stick true to its former Labor Party policy. They pointed out that it was exactly the Gompers non-partisan method which was responsible for the political impotency of the workers and for the presence of such men as Sullivan on the bench. For thus uncompromisingly defending the principle of the Labor Party, which the Chicago Federation itself had advocated for several years, the Communists are now denounced as having helped Sullivan and his backer, Dawes. Can treacherous sophistry go further?

In his lying headline connecting my name with Dawes', Gompers follows out his usual tactics of trying to prove a community of interest between the big capitalists and the Communists as against the unions. What a silly argument. Gompers himself is one of the greatest allies of Dawes and his like against everything progressive in the country and the labor movement. Dawes is a militant defender of the American Legion and so is Gompers, both looking upon this Fascist organization as a valued prop of their beloved capitalist government. Dawes is against the amalgamation of the unions, the formation of a Labor Party, and the recognition of Soviet Russia. So is Gompers; he froths at the mouth when any of these vitally necessary progressive measures are mentioned. Dawes is a supporter of the Civic Federation and the United States Chamber of Commerce, and Gompers is a member of both. Dawes is an ardent "red" fighter and defender of the capitalist system, and in this he is even outdone by the pseudo-leader, Gompers.

The Communists would destroy the industrial and social system which produces the parasitic Dawes. But between Gompers and Dawes there is no real quarrel. They both stand for the same social system and the same exploitation of the workers. They are agreed that the workers must remain in wage slavery. The only difference between them is the degree of this slavery. Dawes would give the workers rough and heavy shackles, while Gompers would make the shackles lighter and polish them up a trifle. That is all there is to the sham battle now going on between them. Gompers and Dawes are props of the capitalist system. Every time that the left-wing moves against that system these two worthies are to be found fighting shoulder to shoulder to protect it. The alliance between the Dawes' and the Gompers' will become ever plainer and more firmly cemented as the class struggle sharpens, until the aroused masses, under the leadership of the Communist party, finally smash it and the system of exploitation behind it.