

John Gates' New Orientation

Elsewhere in this issue we carry a report of the essential contents of a series of six articles in the New York Post by John Gates, former editor-in-chief of the Daily Worker who recently resigned from the Communist Party.

In his last article Gates says he does not "profess to have all the answers." And he remarks, "After being so certain, and dogmatic, on most of what I did for a quarter of a century, I am not inclined to make hasty decisions." He further announces, "I want to talk with people — those who know me, and those who don't. I want to do some listening, some reflecting, some study."

We for our part welcome this approach by Gates and are ready to do everything in our power to promote and develop a free and fraternal discussion of the problems and issues that confront, not only Gates and his associates, but the entire American radical movement.

There are thousands of actively oriented radical workers who have left the Communist Party and its periphery who are eagerly listening to the discussion and seeking answers to their problem. It is clear that the discussion and struggle within the Communist Party itself is far from over; on the contrary, it appears to be entering a more acute and feverish stage. There are in addition organized tendencies like the Socialist Workers Party. Then there is a definite circle of readers and a formation of opinion around the National Guardian, perhaps the most numerous of

all the groups, and around other radical periodicals.

Obviously the task is to promote continuing discussion and efforts to reach agreement on common actions among all these forces.

We cannot agree with Gates on many of the views he expressed in his Post article. For example, we think it is misleading and false to seek the source of all the evils in the Communist Party in its alleged past "sectarianism" and to depict the CP's support of American capitalism during World War II and the Browder period as the golden era that American radicalism should return to. We believe that Stalinism, which is essentially a virulent form of opportunist class collaboration, is the root of the evil that derailed the radical workers movement in the U.S. and throughout the world.

We also feel that Gates fails to approach the crisis of American radicalism from the starting point of the irreconcilable division between those who seek to accommodate "socialism" to the U.S. State Department's demagoguery about the "free world," and those, among whom Gates is included, who take their point of departure from the need to resolve the crisis of the socialist movement within the framework of working class opposition to U.S. Big Business foreign policy.

However, these differences with Gates only underscore the need for discussion and a determined effort to understand one another's point of view without prejudice or bitter recriminations.