

Gates Leaves Communist Party As 'a Futile and Impotent Sect'

***He Would 'Rejoin American
People'—Also Resigns Post
on The Daily Worker***

By HARRISON E. SALISBURY

John Gates, for ten years editor of *The Daily Worker*, announced yesterday his resignation from the Communist party. At the same time he quit his editorship.

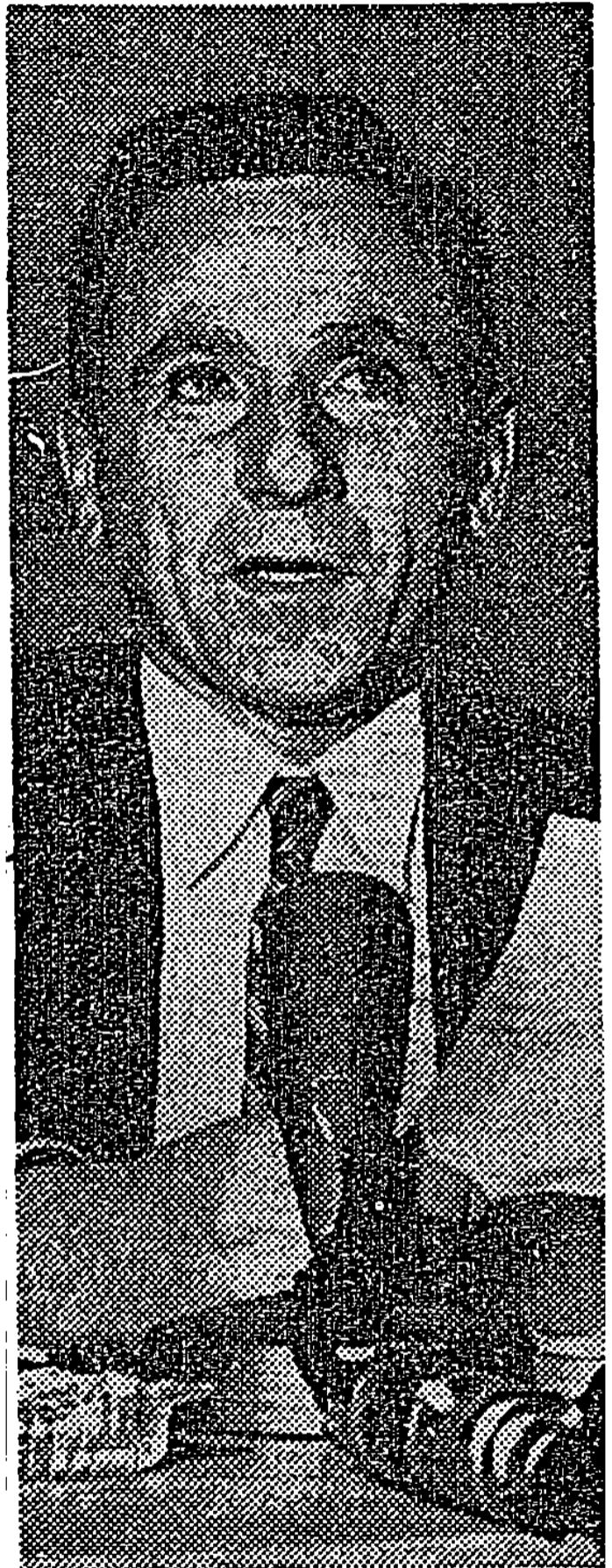
His action further fragments the much-splintered American Communist party. The resignation of many supporters of Mr. Gates, including most of the remaining members of *The Daily Worker's* staff, is expected soon.

Mr. Gates estimated the active membership of the party at below 7,000. He called it "a futile and impotent political sect" that might formally live on for some years but "only as a mummy."

His resignation culminated a bitter fight over *The Daily Worker* and the so-called liberalizing policies it has advocated within the Communist party.

Old-line opponents in the party had already won a fight

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**The New York Times
John Gates as he discussed
his resignation yesterday.**

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to suspend *The Daily Worker*. Its last issue will appear Monday. This will mark the first occasion in nearly forty years that the Communist party has been without a daily newspaper organ.

Mr. Gates is one of the highest Communist officials to quit the party in many years. He was one of the seven party secretaries and a member of the inner directing circle of the movement.

Decline Laid to 'Stupidities'

In a brief letter to the National Committee of the party Mr. Gates declared he had reached his decision, after twenty-seven years of membership, "because I feel that the Communist party has ceased to be an effective force for democracy, peace and socialism in the United States."

He said that "the isolation and decline of the Communist party have long been apparent," but that he had hoped the party might be changed from within. Now, he said, he has concluded that the fight is hopeless.

"The same ideals that attracted me to socialism still motivate me," he said. "I do not believe it is possible any longer to serve those ideals within the Communist party."

He told reporters at the Albert Hotel that the first thing he was going to do was "to rejoin the American people" and "find out what Americans are thinking about."

"I have been partially isolated," he said with a slow grin. "The Communist party has been isolated from the American people by our own foolishnesses and stupidities.

"I haven't left an old sectarianism just to form a new one."

Mr. Gates is 44 years old. He volunteered in World War II and served in Europe as a paratrooper. Before that he had been the commissar of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade in the Spanish Civil War, one of 3,000 American Communists who fought in Spain.

Soviet Lacking Democracy

He declared yesterday that "lack of political democracy" was the chief weakness of the Communist movement everywhere.

"The Soviet Government is not a democratic government," he explained. "Here we have elected representatives, the right of opposition and free speech—although we don't always carry out our rights. These do not exist, except in part, in the Soviet Union."

Mr. Gates recalled that when he was in Atlanta Penitentiary, serving a term of three years and eight months as one of the eleven Communists convicted in the first Communist conspiracy trial in 1950 he did not always think so highly of American democratic rights.

He added, however, that his prison sentence gave him a chance to review many opinions. He read widely and thought a great deal. The foundations of his criticisms of the movement were laid at that time.

The present plight of the party in the United States he attributed in part to support given to his intraparty opponents, William Z. Foster, Benjamin Davis and Eugene Dennis, by the Soviet party and other foreign Communist parties. But Mr. Gates made clear that he did not propose to lend himself to anti-Communist Congressional inquiries.

"The best thing to do about the Communist party is to leave it alone," he said. "No one could do a better job of destroying itself than the party itself. I think it is time the anti-Communist racket is brought to an end in this country."

He described his loyalty to the United States as first, last and always.

Mr. Gates' action was attacked in a statement issued by five of the remaining six party secretaries who comprise the National Administration Committee. They charged Mr. Gates with trying to "split and fragment" the party and asserted that he had lost his "theoretical bearings."