

Packed University Hall Hears Gates, Prof. Debate

By JAMES DOLSEN

PHILADELPHIA—When John Gates, editor-in-chief of the Daily Worker and The Worker, addressed some 500 University of Pennsylvania students in Dietrich Hall, Friday afternoon, Feb. 15, he spoke in reality to many thousands, perhaps the majority of the more than 15,000 students enrolled in that institution.

The Daily Pennsylvanian, the organ of the student body, featured the event in its issues of the preceding day, the day of the meeting itself, and the following Monday.

The issue of Feb. 14 ran a front-page full column story with Gates' picture. The Feb. 15 issue devoted half of its second page to the meeting.

The Monday edition ran on the front page under a six-column banner headline a four-column picture of the packed-in audience, with the two other columns—one on each side—describing the gathering and quoting the main points that Gates made. Half of the second page was given over to a feature story around Gates and his opponent in the debate, Dr. J. Roffe Wike, professor of political science at the university, and to pictures of the speakers and listeners.

The Philadelphia Daily News in its issue of Feb. 16 splashed the debate on its feature pictorial page, with cuts showing the speakers and a section of the keenly listening crowd. The Bulletin and the Inquirer each ran short announcements that the meeting would be held despite advice to the contrary by faculty members. Both papers ignored the event when it took place.

A tape recording of the speaking was broadcast over a local station and then rebroadcast on Monday. Gates thus spoke to hundreds of thousands throughout this area, emphasizing his contention in the discussion that the American Communist Party has a future and outlining some of the ways in which the Communists of this country expect to contribute to its welfare and



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Gates Says CP Wants Political Realignment

Gates Receives 'Open Hearing' In Dietrich Hall

by Arthur C. Pariente
The doors of Dietrich Hall, the building sometimes called the "Citadel of the Money"



'Worker' Editor Debates Future Of American CP

by Charles H. MacNamara
John S. Gates, editor-in-chief of the Daily Worker, called a new political align-

The Daily Pennsylvanian at the U of P gave the top half of its front page on Monday to reporting the Gates-Wike debate. Between the two stories on the debate the

win the support of the people for socialism.

I AM reversing the usual pattern of reporting first the remarks of the speakers because the wide publicity which the debate got is such an outstanding feature.

However, what was said is also very important, as is the reception given Gates' remarks by the audience. The student paper noted that Dietrich Hall is "sometimes called the 'Citadel of the Money Changers'", a comment which may indicate a healthy reaction to the tight grip over our institutions of higher learning by the big bankers and industrialists.

Reference to what the student daily considered Gates' most important points will be illuminating. Its report of the meeting was headlined clear across the top of the front page: "Gates Says CP Wants Political Realignment."

This new political alignment, its reporter quoted Gates as saying, "is a prerequisite for American socialism" in the particular road that the American people take towards that goal as this realignment is also

"a necessary step to the peaceful acceptance of socialism in the U.S."

"Each country," the reporter quoted Gates, "will reach socialism in its own way. Socialism in the U.S. will be different from that in any other country."

The student daily was impressed by Gates' rejection of any doctrine that the Communist Party is "infallible" or that Communists as such are "God's chosen people." It quoted the criticism by Communists of the mistakes of their party, an attitude emphasized by Gates.

Dr. Wike replied that Gates and his associates in the Communist Party were "still professional revolutionists." He said that Gates' reinterpretation of Communism showed that he was carrying on "in the great tradition of his mentor, Lenin." Wike said he resented the attempt of the Communists to present themselves as liberals in the Jackson-Jefferson tradition.

Gates dealt largely with the recent Communist Party national convention and its decisions for greater democratization of the organization and a closer tieup of all party activities with

the mainstream of workingclass struggle, the struggle of the Negro people for their rights in the South and the issue of world peace.

The convention, Gates said, "charted an American road to socialism."

"We dedicated ourselves to help build a big peoples' alliance against monopoly," he said. "The good of America requires at this stage the weakening of the grip of these monopolies on our economy and political life."

To achieve this, Gates continued, the Communists pledged themselves to bring about a "new political realignment," the "formation of a mass political party which will express the interests of the anti-monopoly alliance." It was uncertain, Gates said, what form this realignment would take. Nevertheless, this "new political realignment is the historic goal of the present stage of American development and the prerequisite for any advance toward socialism."

The students seemed impressed with the stress laid on the possibility of a peaceful, constitutional transition to a social-

ist system and its view that socialism will come about in this country only when the majority of its working people are convinced of the pressing need for such a drastic change.

AFTER PRESENTATION by Gates and Dr. Wike of their opposing positions, there were many questions from the audience. The Daily Pennsylvanian noted that only one question was addressed to Dr. Wike. It was evident the students wanted the Communist explanation that party's position.

Although the debate began at one o'clock it was nearly four before Gates managed to get away, and even then students still had questions they wanted answered.

I asked several standing around what they thought of the affair. They said it had been exceedingly worth while. "What we needed!" was the way one laconically expressed his opinion.

The Philadelphia Daily News in its story of the affair noted sarcastically that "Franklin Field (referring to the university) is still standing!"