

BILL LAWRENCE, IN FAREWELL TO AMERICANS IN SPAIN, INTRODUCES COMMISSAR JOHN GATES

Bill Lawrence, popular and hardworking American Political Commissar of the International Brigades Base, has left Spain after a long period of unstinting and fruitful activity to take up important work elsewhere.

His place will be taken by John Gates, who has spent more than a half year on the Cordoba front, as Adjutant Political Commissar of the 86th Brigade. Comrade Gates, who arrived in Spain early in February, reached the Cordoba front on April 1. There he was successively a company commissar, then Political Commissar of the 20th Battalion, and finally the acting Commissar of the entire Brigade. A statement on his activities by Lieutenant-Colonel Morandi, Commander of the 86th Brigade, is printed elsewhere in this issue.

MESSAGE TO MEN

In making his departure known, Comrade Lawrence left the following message to the American comrades in every I. B. unit in Spain:

"I am sorry that I could not say goodbye in person to all of the men with whom I have had occasion to speak during the many months we have been here together. To do this would have meant my remaining here

for at least another month, going from one unit to another. Unfortunately this was impossible, as you will easily understand.

"In leaving I have many things to say — but you already know what they are. All of us — all of us who have done what we came here to do, all of us who have held down our various jobs and held them down well — will know that few words are needed. So I will skip the speeches and make this farewell short and to the point.

OUR RECORD HERE

"The Americans have been here for almost a year. In that time we have earned the praise and the respect not only of the Spanish people, but of the People's Army of Spain and its tireless leaders. We have worked with all of the nationalities which compose the International Brigades, and the best testimony to our value here is that which reflects well not only on us, but on the job which all of us have done here — the fact that after 16 months of war Republican Spain and its organized army are pushing the fight against the enemy in a manner that would have been impossible a half year ago. We, as one small part of the People's Army, should be proud of this fact; we should be more than ever determined to continue the fight to its only logical conclusion — victory for democratic Spain.

CARRY ON!

"If we carry on as we have done in the past, improving slowly but surely in all of our work, I will be more than sa-

THE RECORD OF JOHN GATES AT THE FRONT, AS DESCRIBED BY HIS BRIGADE COMMANDER

86 BRIGADA MIXTA -- MANDO

The adjutant Political Commissar of the 86th Brigade, Comrade JOHN GATES, was one of the organizers of the 20th International Battalion that left the Base at Madrigueras on March 20, 1937.

Named Political Commissar of the 2nd Company (Anglo-American Company), he was the political and organizational spirit of the Company which in all of the battles engaged in at the Pozoblanco front demonstrated great fighting courage and a truly antifascist spirit. The good work of Comrade GATES inculcated a high morale in the men.

In the Company's difficult moments, he was given a special mission by the Military Command that he accomplished with brilliant capacity and a genuine spirit of sacrifice.

Subsequently, he exerted all of his energies in maintaining the antifascist and fighting spirit of the 20th International Battalion which found itself in difficult situations.

He took a leading part in the reconstruction and reorganization of the Battalion after suffering heavy losses in the many battles it engaged in. As a special honor he was proposed as Brigade Political Commissar. While waiting for the official appointment, he was designated Adjutant Political Commissar.

All of the missions that were imposed upon him were satisfactorily carried out. He has gained a high reputation of not only among all of the constituents of the 20th Battalion, but also in Brigade Headquarters and in the Brigade itself.

His transfer to more important work is felt very keenly by the Brigade because we lose in JOHN GATES, a true comrade and an excellent Political Commissar in every aspect.

Brigade Headquarters, Valsequillo, October 19, 1937.

Commander of the Brigade, Acting
Commander of the Sector (Signed),
Lt. Colonel MORANDI, 86 Brigade.



tified. And so, I am sure, will we all be. My leaving at this moment was a necessary thing, and it will cause no break in the work here — my successor could not have been better chosen than Comrade John Gates, fresh from almost seven months in the lines.

"If you give him the cooperation which you have given me, I shall be more than satisfied; and so, I believe, will

Comrade Gates. But he will soon see you and speak to you for himself.

"Carry on just as you have carried on, improving always, together with our British and Canadian comrades, as well as with all our other nationalities in the I. B., and with our Spanish fellow-fighters.

"Salud, comrades!"

BILL LAWRENCE