

# REDS HERE CHIDE 'LIBERAL' FACTION

## Party Statement on Reaction to Fast's Withdrawal Seen as a Defeat for Gates

By HARRY SCHWARTZ

The "liberal" faction in the American Communist party has suffered a significant defeat, an official party statement in yesterday's Daily Worker indicates.

The statement reveals that the party's National Administrative Committee decided last Thursday that "a sharper ideological struggle" must be waged against "prominent" persons who had recently left the Communist party. Apparently this is a rebuke to The Daily Worker and to the Communist literary magazine Mainstream for the relatively soft manner in which they have treated novelist Howard Fast since he announced his break with the party last month.

The action was a defeat particularly for John Gates, leader of the "liberal" faction. As editor of The Daily Worker, he has permitted that paper to comment more in sorrow than in anger at Mr. Fast's defection. He also permitted an interview with Mr. Fast, in which the latter's heretical views were explained at length, to appear in the paper.

### Ouster Move Confirmed

The Communist statement confirmed that an attempt had been made last March 14 to oust Gates as editor of The Daily Worker and indicated that the William Z. Foster, or "Stalinist," faction was continuing its efforts to remove him. It said that the majority voting against Gates' removal felt that the National Administrative Committee was incompetent to decide the issue that must be resolved by the National Com-

mittee now being elected by Communists throughout the country.

This confirmation came after a week during which Communist leaders including Gates had refused to comment on the ouster attempt. The Daily Worker made no mention of the matter. The Communist statement asserted that a story in The New York Times describing the ouster attempt was "malicious" and declared that the non-Communist "press is trying to intervene in the internal affairs of the Communist party and to sow division, confusion and suspicion within its ranks."

Sources close to the Communist party yesterday termed the official statement misleading. They said that the ouster attempt had been defeated by the votes of the Gates faction with the help of the Centrist group headed by Eugene Dennis, former party general secretary. Dennis' group, it was reported, however, supports the Foster faction in believing that The Daily Worker and Mainstream have dealt too gently with Fast and other recent defectors from the party's ranks.

### Party 'Leak' Investigated

The Communist statement ordered a tightening in security within the National Administrative Committee's ranks. It announced that the committee "is looking into the rumor that some Communist leader may have 'leaked'" the original report of the effort to oust Gates that appeared in non-Communist newspapers in the last few days.

The internal party struggle is expected to come to a climax next week when the New York State Communist organization, embracing about half the remaining membership, meets to elect its representatives to the National Committee.

A victory for the Gates faction at the election is expected since most of the New York State leadership agrees with Gates or goes even further and agrees with Fast that the So-

viet version of socialism is totalitarian and morally bankrupt. The issue may be decided, however, by the extent to which party "liberals" feel that the Communist party is now so compromised that it has no future—and therefore decide to drop out rather than to try to reform the party from within.