

FAST CONDEMNS SOVIET LEADERS

Novelist Who Broke With Red Party Here Says System in Russia Lacks Morality

By **HARRY SCHWARTZ**

Howard Fast has attacked the Soviet system as "socialism without morality" and has called for the removal of the present Soviet leadership.

The novelist was generally considered the most prominent American Communist writer until his announcement last month that he had broken with the Communist party here. His indictment of the Soviet system and leadership is published in the March issue of *Mainstream*, a left wing literary magazine that has been close to the Communist party in the past. In the same issue the magazine's editors publish a reply rejecting Mr. Fast's views.

Mr. Fast indicts the Soviet system and the Soviet leadership on these counts:

¶The Soviet system is "socialism without democracy, without trial by jury, habeas corpus or the right against self incrimination, without civil liberty, without public avenues of protest, without equality for minorities, without right of free artistic creation."

¶The present Soviet leaders must be denounced by men of goodwill "not only for their acquiescence in the crimes of Stalin, but for their continuing record of intolerance and dogmatic bossism since the exposure of these crimes."

The novelist singles out as particular targets Nikita S. Khrushchev, first secretary of the Soviet Communist party, and Ilya Ehrenburg, the leading Soviet novelist. Mr. Fast accuses Mr. Khrushchev of "diplomacy by insult and vulgarity."

He accuses Mr. Ehrenburg, who is of Jewish origin, of being a Soviet variation of the "honorary Aryan"; that is, a Jew or other "non-Aryan" who was acceptable to Adolf Hitler.

The novelist indicates his belief that Communist parties suffer from fatal contradictions.

Mainstream's editors imply sympathy with part of Mr. Fast's views. In an apparent reference to Mr. Khrushchev, they assail "anti-Semitism in the form of anecdotes about Jews." They indicate, however, that they are more hopeful for reform in the Soviet Union than is Mr. Fast and that they do not believe that the crimes committed in the Soviet Union are inescapable under Communist rule.

The announcement last month of Mr. Fast's break with the Communist party here still has not drawn public comment from the Soviet Union.

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