

Moscow Writer Denounces Fast As Zionist Apologist for Israel

Literary Newspaper Ascribes Novelist's Break With Reds to Soviet-Israeli Split

By MAX FRANKEL
Special to The New York Times.

MOSCOW, Jan. 30—Howard Fast was treated here today to a scathing denunciation that covered more than a page of Moscow's chief literary newspaper and appeared to be designed as the final Soviet word on the American novelist.

Mr. Fast, who won a 1953 Stalin peace prize while still a member of the Communist party of the United States, was condemned as a "militant Zionist" and as an apologist for Israel. He was called a swindler, an opportunist, a savage and a deserter and was characterized as immodest, discourteous, cheap, wall-eyed, cowardly, dishonest and indecent.

The newspaper *Literaturnaya Gazeta* told Soviet readers that the man who had been the most popular American writer here "was never capable of good logical thought." It charged that Mr. Fast had confused religion with Marxism and therefore in essence "had never been a member of the party."

Reds' Expansion Noted

Since his break with communism a year ago, the paper said, Mr. Fast has turned to writing "sour, eclectic hodge-podge" against the Soviet Union for profit. But it urged Soviet citizens to pay no heed, since really "nothing" had happened. Capitalism still wins over a few persons, the paper noted, while the Communist world has grown from a "sea to an ocean" of one billion people.

"That is why we treated Howard Fast's departure so calmly," it added.

The Soviet press for seven months completely ignored Mr. Fast's resignation. Only after last summer's Youth Festival, during which many American visitors were asked about the author's turnabout, did *Literaturnaya Gazeta* record it in an article entitled "Desertion Under Fire."

The earlier article was a model of restraint in comparison with today's blast, written by N. Gribachev, a Soviet writer who visited the United States last year.



The New York Times
Howard Fast

"In the field of art, you are not a man without talent," Mr. Gribachev wrote, addressing Mr. Fast directly. "But you have a long way to go to match the titans of social thought and that is why you look very, very comical in the role of a master of intellect to which you so unceremoniously pretend. Exchange your party card for a checkbook at the Manhattan Bank and live as you can without falling into cheap self-exaggeration."

The Soviet writer thought that the real reason behind Mr. Fast's break with communism was the American's love of Israel, whose relations with the Soviet Union have been deteriorating. According to the Moscow newspaper, Mr. Fast last year denounced the "insulting" tone of a message the Kremlin sent to Israel after her armies invaded Egypt in November, 1956.

"Fast got indignant at the sharpness of the note to Israel," Mr. Gribachev said. "But he did not get indignant at the fact that Israel started the aggression."

"The truth is that Howard Fast is not a Marxist, not an internationalist, but a militant Zionist who camouflages the insistent preaching of national exclusiveness with platonic words about fraternity," the Russian declared.