

FACTIONAL BATTLE SPLITS REDS HERE

Effort to Oust Gates as Editor of Worker Starts Fight for Party Control

By HARRY SCHWARTZ

Internal discord is raging more bitterly than ever in the American Communist party, sources close to the party declared yesterday.

The public show of unity made at the end of last month's Communist national convention has been dissipated, these sources said. Instead, a bitter battle is taking place between the factions headed by William Z. Foster and by John Gates for control of the party's national committee. That control will be determined by the outcome of regional elections to the committee now taking place.

The bitterness of the struggle was observable last week when the Foster faction made an unsuccessful effort to remove Gates as editor of The Daily Worker. The ouster attempt was made at a closed meeting here of the resident members of the party's national committee and was based on charges that "anti-Soviet" and "revisionist" materials had been printed in The Daily Worker.

A Communist party spokesman, Simon W. Gerson, charged yesterday that J. Edgar Hoover, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, has set himself up as a "political censor" in his evaluation of the recent Communist national convention.

Mr. Gerson declined to comment on the effort made last week to oust Gates, leader of the so-called "liberal" faction of the party, from his Daily Worker post. Alan Max, Daily Worker Managing Editor, also declined to comment, but sources close to

the party gave the following picture:

The Foster factions fears that the election of forty additional national committee members by regional Communist party organizations will give the Gates group a majority. The decisive vote will be taken by the New York State Communist organization, which embraces about half the party membership and which will elect its quota of national committee members in the next two weeks.

Publication in The Daily Worker and in Mainstream, a magazine close to the party, of an article by and an interview with Howard Fast denouncing the Soviet system as "totalitarian socialism" has given the Foster group ammunition. Since Fast denounced the Soviet attitude toward Israel, the Gates group is being accused of "Jewish bourgeois nationalism" for giving publicity to Fast's views and for treating him gently ra-

ther than severely in The Daily Worker's columns.

Some Negro leaders of the party, particularly Benjamin J. Davis Jr., associated with the Foster group, are said to be using the Jewish issue particularly, relating it to what they deem to be the inadequate support being given to Egypt in The Daily Worker's handling of the Egyptian-Israeli dispute. Davis is reported to have been the individual who introduced the resolution to oust Gates as Daily Worker editor.

Some sympathizers with Gates charged that the effort to oust him had been inspired by hope that Gates' supporters would become so disgusted that they would drop out of the party and leave its control in the hands of the Foster faction. Significant party losses are reported to have taken place in recent weeks, particularly of "liberals" who would have backed Gates if they had remained.

The party balance of power is now reported to be held by a centrist group headed by Eugene Dennis, former general secretary of the party. Mr. Dennis is reported to have voted against the ouster of Gates at last week's meeting and thus to have swung the balance against the Foster-Davis group.

Mr. Gerson ceased being a Communist party spokesman yesterday and today becomes executive editor of The Daily Worker.