

FOSTER DEFENDS HIS STALIN LINE

American Red Chief Points to Dictator's Grip and Support in the Party

William Z. Foster, American Communist leader, has come to the defense of Soviet leaders who worked with Stalin while the dictator ruled the Soviet Union. By implication, Mr. Foster defended his own pro-Stalinist policies in the Communist party since the Nineteen Twenties.

Writing in yesterday's Daily Worker, the Communist newspaper, he conceded that many persons were asking Communist leaders: "Where were you while Stalin was doing all this?"

Mr. Foster wrote that any attempt to challenge Stalin would have had to face the fact that Stalin "was very powerful, with a vast and loyal support in the party and among the broad masses of the people; he was also a resolute fighter, with an extensive experience in fighting against opposition movements."

Demand Seems Rejected

"An organized movement against Stalin would have had to confront the prospect of a split in the party," Mr. Foster said. "And such a split at any time during the past twenty-five years could have brought a fatal disaster to the Soviet Union, with the country struggling almost desperately to industrialize itself, to defeat various inner-party oppositions, to beat back rising world fascism, to carry through World War II, and to

resist the militant war drive of American imperialism during the years of the 'cold war'."

While giving this justification for the Soviet leaders of today, Mr. Foster wrote they would have to supply the final answer regarding their responsibility since "they alone are in possession of the most decisive facts," and "this will surely be forthcoming in due time."

Mr. Foster thus appears to reject the demand, voiced in some letters in The Daily Worker, that American Communists must answer questions about the revaluation of Stalin.

The American Communist leader's attitude seems to be consistent with the explanations being offered Communists in Poland and East Germany. Walter Ulbricht, East German Communist leader, has gone one step farther and pointed to Nikolai A. Voznesensky, former Soviet Politburo member, as one who tried to oppose Stalin and was shot for his rebellion.