RUSSIA'S PART IN SPAIN'S CIVIL WAR

We note that several Catholic papers are citing the series of articles by W. G. Krivitsky, now appearing in "The Saturday Evening Post," to defend the position which they took in the Spanish Civil War. Krivitsky is a former general in the Red Army.

If the articles, particularly the first one, captioned "Stalin's Hand in Spain," show anything, it is demonstrated rather clearly that the last European power to take part in the Spanish Civil War was Russia. The article also sustains the contention that the Spanish Civil War was a fight for control of the Mediterranean, not by Spain, but by two other interested nations and that Russia jumped in because control of Spain would put her in a strategic position to force England and France to deal with her against the Fascist and Nazi dangers.

A few Catholic papers, we note, found the article disappointing.

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What must be particularly galling to those who willingly went out on a limb to repeat all the propaganda dished out in favor of Franco is that the author of the article is one who escaped a purge to come to America. He is not what one might call a disinterested witness in the case of Stalin and logically might be expected to tell the worst possible side of Russia's participation to discredit Stalin further. The "worst possible" side fails to establish nearly every one of the contentions made by Franco's apologists; two in particular are blasted. This is the fantastic tale told that unimpeachable evidence had been discovered of a nation-wide plot on the part of Russia to liquidate all Catholics in Spain just before the Franco rebellion. The discovery of this evidence was urged to justify the uprising by the Franco apologists here. His article indicates that at the time of the rebellion Stalin was not more than passively interested in Spain. The other is the extent of Russia's participation. It was a dollar for dollar intervention and at no time did Russian military forces number more than 2,000 men, confined to technical and non-fighting work. Stalin's policy was described as one of keeping out of range of the artillery. This makes the contention of those who sought to enlist American Catholics...
in the civil war on Franco's side, that hundreds of thousands of Russian Troops were
fighting, appear more fantastic than it sounded when first uttered.

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The position taken by this column on the subject is sustained by the
Krivitsky article. The Holy War aspect and the Church were dragged into the picture by
propagandists and interested parties, just as the Church is dragged into local and municipal
politics throughout the world by selfish individuals and groups, willing to trade the Church,
the people and everything they should hold dear, for some immediate gain.

The sad part about it all is that it will not be the last time that the
Church is used and that churchmen will permit themselves to be used, Nor will people learn
when the propagandists of Press, Pulpit and Platform turn on the sob stuff and the mass
hysteria in the name of the Catholic religion.