**Soviet Jewry**

Next Monday evening at sundown marks the inauguration of the Jewish holiday of Simhat Torah (rejoicing of the Law) which carries a special significance for the Jews of Russia. Every other day of the year they suffer repression, brutalization, and oppression with nary a whimper in reply, but on this day, Soviet Jewry, especially youths of high school and college age, openly demonstrate their defiance of authority and unwillingness to succumb to the spiritual genocide being inflicted on them. For the last several years, young Soviet Jews have flocked to the few remaining synagogues (over 30,000 came to the Moscow synagogue alone last year) to celebrate this holiday by singing and dancing as the world and to show them their rulers that the spark of Judaism is still burning within them. To understand the significance of this act, one must appreciate what it means to be a Jew in U.S.S.R.

Jews have a singular status under Soviet law. All other people within the Soviet Union are classified as such by the word "Ivrei" on their internal documents. Other people within the Soviet Union are classified as such by the word "Ivrei" on their internal documents. Jews have a singular status under Soviet law.

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Thus, there is one synagogue for each 50,000 Jews remaining in the Soviet Union (that's about like having 20 churches for all the Catholics in the entire world). Some 1,500 Jewish/////s, especially prayer books, have been produced and distributed in the Soviet Union since 1921. Other religious groups face much better barriers than the Iron Curtain, but it cannot be said that this is merely an expression of general religious repression. Nationality groups with 150,000 members or less, are allowed to remain in their position and serve as showpieces.

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