

COMMUNISM IN PRACTICE

TREATMENT OF THE JEWS UNDER COMMUNISM*

- The Report of the Select Committee on Communist aggression, House of Representatives. Eighty-Third Congress.

After investigating the treatment of Jews in the Soviet Union, the annexed territories, and the satellite countries, the following conclusions are made:

1. The totalitarian Communist regime oppress all national and religious minorities because in their drive for totalitarian "gleichschaltung" and world expansion they cannot tolerate any expression of independent spiritual and communal life.
2. The Jewish minority is a special target of Communist persecution because it is suspected of attachment to the religious tenets of Judaism and to the humanitarian values of Jewish culture and history, as well as of ties of cultural and emotional solidarity reaching behind the borders of the Communist empire.
3. In all countries where they came to power, the Communist regimes expropriated the Jewish population and left it uprooted and destitute. No sustained efforts were made to facilitate the integration of the impoverished Jewish middle and lower classes into the new economic system. While the proletarianized sections of the Jewish population were met in their new jobs in factories, on farms, and in public offices, by a new upsurge of anti-Semitic attitudes, the remaining "surplus population" was in many cases deported to starve and die in bleak, remote regions of the Communist empire or in slave labor camps.
4. The Jewish religion was and is persecuted by the Communists, like all other religions. Most synagogues have been closed, most rabbis arrested, and the religious education of the youth is forbidden. Religious observance has been made impossible and the few surviving religious communities have been taken over by Communist agents and forced to serve Communist propaganda purposes. The synagogues still open in a few places accessible to foreign observers are maintained only to facilitate the police supervision of the believers, and to deceive gullible visitors from abroad by asemblance of "religious freedom."
5. The once flourishing Jewish cultural and communal life has been completely suppressed throughout the Communist empire. Two million Jews in the Soviet Union proper have not a single periodical, not a single school, not a single theater, not a single publishing house, not a single welfare institution, not a single association of any kind of their own. The few Jewish periodicals, schools, theaters, and cultural associations still surviving in the satellite countries are completely dominated by Communist-imposed leaderships and degraded to mere organs of Communist propaganda and indoctrination.
6. The so-called Jewish Autonomous Province in Birobidjan never attracted more than an Infinitesimal fraction of Soviet Jews; within its borders the Jews always remained a minority and never developed any significant Jewish culture. Forced to live in indescribable misery, most of them left Birobidjan as fast as they could. In recent years ,the province, completely cut off from the outer world, became a part of the slave labor empire of the Communist secret police, and about half its Jewish population was arrested in big purges and confined in labor camps.
7. An entire generation of Jewish communal leaders, Zionist and non-Zionist, "bourgeois" and socialist alike, was arrested, deported, and in large part exterminated. Later the Communist-imposed officials of Jewish communities, as well as Communists of Jewish origin unconnected with the Jewish communities, joined them on their way to jails and concentration camps.
8. In the Communist totalitarian society, misery and starvation, class differences in the standards of living between the elite rulers and their enslaved subjects, and the incessant, murderous struggle among the Communist bure-crats for survival and advancement produce and reproduce group tensions of great virulence. Appealing to anti-Semitic attitudes inherited from the past and steadily nourished by the conflicts within the totalitarian society, the Communist rulers use the Jews as convenient scapegoats for the crimes and failures of their regime.

9. In the past, Communist authorities often failed to protect the Jews against pogroms and riots which they usually tolerated, and sometimes surreptitiously instigated. But in the last few years, the Communist regimes have made anti-Semitism an instrument of government policy. They have removed Jews from most influential party, civil service, and professional positions. They have invented, in Nazi-like fashion, a "worldwide Jewish conspiracy," sentenced hundreds of men and women of Jewish origin to death or jail for the participation in it, and carried on all over their empire a vicious campaign of anti-Semitic hatred.

10. The Communist attitude toward the Jews was not substantially revised after Stalin's death. Only its forms were modified: anti-Semitic drives are now less publicized and better concealed from the free world. But Jewish communal life remains suppressed, the belief in a worldwide Jewish conspiracy continues to be an article of Communist faith, and the persecutions are proceeding as before. In dozens of trials, now conducted secretly, hundreds of Jews, former communal leaders as well as Communists of Jewish parentage, are being tried on the same fake charges of "Zionist plots".

11. Thus the totalitarian rule of Communism remains incompatible with a free profession of Jewish religion, with a free development of Jewish cultural and communal life, with the very existence of Jewish communities, and with the elementary existence and security of individual Jewish citizens.