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ITEM No. 2793/53

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18 March
VII/M.699 b

RUMANIA

DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTRY

GENERAL MOOD

STANDARD OF LIVING

Short Items.

SOURCE TRIESTE: recent emigrant

DATE OF OBSERVATION: until the end of December 1952

EVAL. COMMENT I: The report depicts a few aspects of a Rumanian town which has a strong Soviet garrison, revealing some interesting details on the standard of living, general mood and the relations between the Soviet military personnel and the population. (See for reference Item Nos 13730/52 and 13515/52.)

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1.) Life at TIMISOARA is no fun for those who are not inscribed party members, in fact it is extremely difficult. Only Party members and Russian officers (who can be seen blind drunk roaming through the streets quite often) frequent the clubs and shops. Generally, however, the Soviets avoid any contacts with the local population and live quite isolated.

The housing crises is very serious. The most luxurious TIMISOARA districts are occupied by the Securitate and the Russian officers are living in the very best private houses. The private citizens who used to live here before have been transferred to the outskirts of TIMISOARA.

On the other hand there are no new private or State building constructions in course.

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Any private commercial or industrial enterprise has been abolished. There are no longer any private shops. The only shops which are still working are those under State management, i.e. "MAGAZINUL DE STAT" called "MAGAZINUL DE STATSI DE PRIVIT," as the Rumanian people call it derisively. This is a rather well supplied shop, but the prices asked for the available goods are quite inaccessible for the majority of the population. In fact, the average workman's wages are only 400 Lei per month, and this amount is not sufficient to keep him properly fed, to say nothing of buying clothing or maintaining a family. That's the reason why at TIMISOARA there are quite a few second hand shops, which help the Rumanian citizen of today to make ends meet. The salaries paid to high State officials, and doctors particularly, are rather high. A professor of the faculty of medicine receives, for instance 1,200 Lei per month.

The discontent among the population is very intense, but so far, there were no manifestations of any active reaction.

2) The Following fact characterizes the relations between Rumanian Civilians and Soviet soldiers: Our source had occasion to go to the TIMISOARA pub in the company of a Soviet officer in November 1951, where they made the acquaintance of another Rumanian, who addressed them in Russian. When the officer asked him where he learned to speak Russian so well, the Rumanian replied that he had been in STALINGRAD. As soon as he heard that the officer threw himself at him and beat him up ferociously.

End.