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POLAND

<u>ETHNIC MINORITIES</u>	(1100)
Greeks	(1106)
<u>STANDARD OF LIVING</u>	(3200)
Pensions	(3208)
<u>DESCRIPTION OF COUNTRY</u>	(3800)
Towns	(3802)

OLD AGE HOMES FOR AGED GREEKS

SOURCE ATHENS: A Greek repatriate from Polish old age home.
Former porter.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Until October 1956.

EVALUATION COMMENT: We knew about the old age home for Greeks on Kosciuszki street in ZGORZELEC, but information about another one called "Przychodnia" is new to us. We see no reason to doubt source's story.

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In the town of ZGORZELEC there are many Greek families who were abducted by the Communists during the war. Many of them are invalids (wounded guerrillas,) aged or unable to work.

The Polish authorities founded two old age homes exclusively for aged Greeks over sixty-five. Both homes are supervised by Poles. There are 17 Poles occupied with the direction, management and supervision of the two homes, and an additional 12 to 15 Poles occupied with the distribution of clothing to those Greeks who are unemployed, aged or unable to work. According to source, life is the same in each of the homes.

"Kosciuszki" Old Age Home

One of the old age homes is called "Kosciuszki," deriving its name from the fact that it is located on "Kosciuszki" Street. The home consists of one two-story building.

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"Przychodnia" Old Age Home

The other old age home is called "Przychodnia". It is a two-story building between two streets. Source recalls only that the street in back is named Daszynskiego. Source was an inmate of this from February 1955 until his repatriation in October 1956. Source said the Poles behaved well toward the inmates and treated them kindly.

The "Przychodnia" home had nearly 160 inmates. Only those persons who have no other family members able to work and support them are eligible for these homes, said source. He stated that many of the inmates were really not so aged. They pretended to be aged rather than cope with bad support and hard work. Nearly one third had reached a point where they looked much older than they really were.

The very aged were helped about by the younger inmates, source said, since there was no special personnel to supervise the treatment of the inmates. There are, however, two nurses on the staff who give injections and medicines to the sick. Those who suffer from incurable diseases or other severe illnesses are sent to various hospitals or clinics in Poland. Source said it was estimated that one fourth of the Greeks in Poland were ill.

Inmates Punished With Curtailment of Cigarettes

Each inmate received the sum of 20 zloty monthly, and those who smoke are given a daily ration of 10 cigarettes. Source said punishment often consisted in stopping the cigarette ration. The Polish personnel were assisted by some Greeks who were used as interpreters. These interpreters followed the discussions of the inmates and reported those who spoke in favor of repatriation and against Communism. The administrative personnel would then stop the cigarette ration, telling them they realized that they were not smoking the cigarettes they were given. Source said they realized the Greek Communists were responsible for their being deprived of cigarettes. After de-Stalinization, conditions became somewhat better, and the ration was no longer curtailed.

Bedding and Clothing Issued

On the ground floor of the home there are the kitchen, dining room, storerooms, and auxiliary rooms. On the second floor there are many small rooms. In every room, according

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to its size, there are three, four or five iron beds with springs, each with an ordinary quality mattress.

Each inmate received a sheet and two blankets. Source said his blankets were old but still in good condition. After September 1956 a few quilts were distributed, but there were not enough to go around. In addition to bedding, the inmates are given clothing and underwear. They get new issue upon turning in the old items when they are entirely useless. Source said the dresses are of bad cloth, reportedly made from wood and straw.

Food Is Miserable

The boarders ate all their meals in the dining room. The food was served to them in dishes, similar to those to be found in second class restaurants. Breakfast is tea or coffee made from barley or various fried pulses. Until the beginning of 1955, the usual food was boiled, fried, or mashed potatoes and occasionally a very tiny portion of meat. The bread was terrible. After July 1955, the food rations improved. The inmates were given meat frequently, but the servings remained approximately one-fourth that of a regular portion. The bread improved, although it still continued to taste a little sour.

Some Inmates Work For Extra Money

Source said that the letters they wrote were conserved, but no letters were ever lost. However, the inmates found the monthly sum of 20 zloty which they received was insufficient even to cover the purchase of stamps and writing paper. Consequently, many of them were obliged to work in the nursery or the vegetable gardens. For this work, they were paid 0.60 zloty per hour. Source said they suspected that the Communist boarders are given more money than the others.

Entertainment Lacking

Source said that for the most part the inmates spent their time conversing about their hopes to return to their native country and discussing the contents of the letters which they received from their relatives. Other entertainment was rare. Once a month they were allowed a trip to the cinema where they saw Russian propaganda films. Also, once a year the little Greek children who attended a special school in POLICE (SZCZECIN,) came and sang, danced or put on short plays.

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Able-bodied Forced To Work

Those inmates who felt themselves able to work reported the fact to the administration, who gladly gave them permission to work. They kept 25 per cent of their allowance for the days they worked. However, if the number of working days exceeded ten in any one month, then the inmates were no longer entitled to free clothing; they would then have to purchase clothing with their own money.

Frequently an inspection took place, and the aged who were found still capable of working were sent to the factories. During the first six months of 1955, the administration conducted three such inspections and ordered some of the inmates to report to the factories.

Life of the Aged Outside the Homes

Source said that many of the Greeks who are aged and no longer able to work do not want to enter the old age homes. They prefer to struggle along as best they can rather than put up with the food served in the homes. Many live together in some buildings with adjoining rooms, which are located on Daszynskiego, Warszawska and Stalina Streets. Source said these buildings were probably former barracks.

Those unable to work get an unemployment allowance of 180 zloty monthly. With this money they must support and clothe themselves. Actually, said source, the sum was not enough to buy even a pair of trousers. According to source, a strange thing happened this year; the Polish authorities distributed an overcoat to some, a jacket to others, and still others received a pair of trousers.

Old Age Home For Aged Poles

According to source, there is also a home for aged Poles in ZGORZELEC. It is a three-story building located on Prusa Street. Formerly 300 inmates were there, but the number has been reduced to 70. Those who visited this home say that the Poles there live martyred lives. They are not allowed to leave the home, and they are not given a cigarette ration. They say that life in the Greek homes for the aged is far better in comparison with the Polish home, and for this reason, the Poles envy the Greeks.

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