

LL
12 Feb
NL/125/T

HUNGARY

DESCRIPTION OF THE COUNTRY (3801.1)

RELIGION (2806)

Teleki Ter Square

SOURCE TRIESTE: A worker from BUDAPEST.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Up to 30 November 1952.

EVAL. COMMENT: The Teleki square is partly still a kind of flea-market in BUDAPEST. Reported conditions are generally known and the prices correct.

Details on the religious life are also known from previous information. It is interesting to point out that information on the activities of peace-priests is increasing and this is a clear proof that more and more priests are obliged to join the CP sponsored peace-priest movement.

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The poverty and misery of the people of BUDAPEST can be seen at close quarters at the Teleki Ter Square. Everything can be either purchased or sold there, except of course gold. The square is crowded with ambulant counters. A pedestrian crossing through the square is approached by special venders who ask him whether he has anything to sell or if he wishes to buy something. If the client has something for sale, the vendor then offers him a very low price for the merchandise and only then starts to bargain. If the client is not satisfied with the price offered, he tries to strike a bargain with other people in the middle of the square. But before he is allowed to reach the middle of the square where the bargains are made, he has to pay 1.50 Forint for the right of entering the middle of the square.

Prices of the items on sale are extremely high compared with the cost of living and the quality of the goods on sale. Everything is seen there even such things as household goods, carpets, furniture, works of art, pottery, valises and all kinds of clothing items. Clothes are very expensive there. For example one man's coat, which can still be turned inside out costs about 1,000 Forint. This is the price of a

(Over)

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brand new coat in one of the state shops, but the source states that a coat purchased in a State store is of a very poor quality especially as far as the material is concerned, while coats on sale in Teleki Ter are made from the good-times material.

An old winter coat all patched, which prior to World War II was being sold as rags per kilo, is nowadays valuable and costs 250 Forint. There exists also the lowest quality of winter coats, for men, which is almost completely composed of patches and this sort costs between 180 to 200 Forint. The source affirms that one cannot possibly get a coat for less than this amount.

One man's suit of clothes which still can be turned inside out, of quite good quality costs up to 1,500 Forint. The source personally witnessed during September of 1952 when an old lady aged about 60 (NU) sold an old suit of clothes, probably belonging to her husband, for the amount of 1,500 Forint. The man's suit was purchased by a tailor (NU) who resides on Kolosvary Uca at BUDAPEST. The source own coat which had cost him 700 Forint is so dreadful that only a beggar in TRIESTE would wear it.

Wrist watches were priced as follows: minimum 450 Forint up to 1,200 Forint.

The source and his wife stated that they went to the Holy Mass on Sundays but never stayed to hear the sermon. The reason is, he explains, that on March 1952 he went to the Hermina Catholic church at PEST. The Catholic priest there (NU) of that church began a sermon which was more or less a speech made by a Communist leader and not a priest.

The source added that whenever he or a member of his family went to church on Sunday, they chose a church far from their place of living where they could be sure of not being recognized by the AVH agents who are in all churches.

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