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HUNGARY

STANDARD OF LIVING (3202)

Housing Difficulties in BUDAPEST.

SOURCE TRIESTE: A workers wife from BUDAPEST.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Up to 30 November 1952

EVAL. COMMENT: A poor report on the housing situation in BUDAPEST. Reported details fit well into the picture of the increasing misery of the Hungarian population. The individual data are UNCONFIRMED, but there are thousands and thousands of people who live in the same circumstances in BUDAPEST.

Our informant resided with her family in the 15 Kerulet (she refuses to disclose the name of the street and number) at BUDAPEST. The 15 Kerulet is a poor sector of BUDAPEST. The house where she lived was very small, composed of two rooms and a kitchen. The owner of the house was an old lady who was a poor woman aged 67 - Nelli OSZTROCKI. The house had only one floor and a small court-yard.

The rooms were occupied in the following order:

1. the informant, her husband, her daughter aged 19, and her son aged 14.
2. This room was occupied by Nelli OSZTROCKI.

Each room was 4 x 4 meters large. The kitchen was 2.5 m x 2.5 meters, but the informant states that Nelli hardly ever cooked at home and so did not use her kitchen very much. The room occupied by the informant and her family had two single beds in it. The source slept with her daughter, while her husband shared the bed with his son. There was no running water in the house and it had to be brought in from a fountain in the street. There was also no S.C. but simply a hole made in the court-yard, surrounded by a wooden fence. The only "convenience" the house possessed was electricity.

An amount of 45 Forint was paid monthly by the informant as the rent. But according to OSZTROCKI, she had to pay 44 Forint in taxes to the state and thus remained with only 1 Forint per month. She therefore had to work for food only with various acquaintances in BUDAPEST. She had sold all her household goods and possessed only a mattress, no bed and therefore slept on the floor, at her age.

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Our informant had agreed to pay 3 Forint per month as taxes to the State for the R.C. When the hole had to be emptied, she had to pay an extra 20 Forint, this, every three or four months.

In the kitchen were: one table, three chairs, a small cupboard, an iron-made stove and a stove for cooking.

For the consumption of electricity, the informant had to pay 6 Forint in the summer and about 12 to 15 Forint monthly in the winter.

The informant had a neighbor a certain Gergey MESZAROS. He was a former barber by profession, nowadays a fanatical Communist, and an active member of the CP, who attended the courses of the Party daily. MESZAROS, affirmed the source, was wicked and she had to be very careful when tuning in to foreign broadcasts, for she was afraid of him.

During spring of 1952 MESZAROS killed a cat belonging to our informants children. The cat was sitting on the divisory wall between the two court-yards and for some unexplicable reason, MESZAROS killed him. The children cried of course but nothing could be done against him.

The informant, however, who is a simple person believes that he was punished:

"God punished MESZAROS, because I think that he became crazy some time later. He could not sleep, through the night, he was walking in his home and in the courtyard, swearing and from time to time, we heard him hawlin' in the night like a mad man."

End.