

ITEM No. 9854/55

IK
Nov 18
III/4265 C

POLAND

STANDARD OF LIVING /3200/
Prices /3204/

CONDITIONS IN SILESIA

SOURCE BERLIN: An East German refugee who worked as a mate and navigator with an East German shipping company at MAG-DEBURG. He often piloted ships on the Oder river and was in Poland four times during 1954-55 visiting relatives.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Summer of 1955.

EVALUATION COMMENT: We do not agree in two instances: A pair of nylon stockings costs from 150 to 200 zlotys/ and not 400/ while a wrist-watch cannot be bought for less than 800 Zl. /We wonder what sort of watch it is which is sold at 25 East Marks at HO stores and traded at 100 zlotys in Poland./

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Although the agricultural picture in Silesia has somewhat improved during the last year, vast plains of arable land are still uncultivated. According to Germans now living there, there is a distinct reluctance on the part of the Poles from other regions to settle in Silesia.

Source said that last July Poles in Silesia were getting fresh meat twice a week. Some additional canned meat was sometimes issued. In order to get the meat due them Polish housewives sometimes begin lining up in front of butcher shops as early as three o'clock in the morning.

Having seen the Silesian standard of living this past summer, source concluded that people there were not living half so well as the people of East Germany.

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Meat , one kilo	about 40 zloty
Butter, one kilo	about 56 zloty
Eggs, one ea.	about 1 zloty
Nylons, one pair	about 400 zloty
A wrist - watch, produced in East Germany and sold - if	
available -at GDR H-O stores for 25 East marks about 100 zloty.	

Prices of textiles are so high that the group of potential customers is exceedingly small. In general, people have no money to buy any clothes.

Source said that the average monthly salary of a worker or employee in Silesia amounts to between 700 and 800 zloty.

End.