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ITEM No 1397

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29 January 1952
VI-253

RUMANIA

COMMUNIST PARTY
Privileges

"Special" Distributing Stores Instituted For The
Families Of Central Committee Party Members.

SOURCE ROME: Information given by a 35-year-old employee of the BUCHAREST Alimentara Society Technical Section. He worked in these "special stores" for some months and has seen the following with his own eyes.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: current period

It is well known that "secret" food distribution centers exist in Rumania, where only Party members having a special ration card stamped by their employers firm can buy goods.

We have been informed by an ex-employee of the Alimentara Society how these "special" stores are run.

These stores are open from 0800 until 1400 and from 1600 until 2000 hours. Specific hours in which to shop are marked on the card and if you do not arrive in time you cannot buy what you want. This has been arranged in order to avoid lines or crowds in the store. Everything one could possibly wish for can be found in these food and clothing stores. Everything is of the best quality and the prices are very much lower than those for the same goods sold to the population by the same State Alimentara through State-stores.

These stores are located as follows: Bonaparte Society food store in front of the streetcar depot situated in an ex-bar; sells only to Central Committee members.

Jianu Society in Stefan Gheorghiu Street sells food and clothing to Central Committee Party members. The store is situated in a private house.

Shop at No. 12 Diana street (Rosetti Square) sells food and clothing for the "Diplomatic Corps."

Our source was able to see GEORGESCU Teohari buy some things in the Jianu Society store in Stefan Gheorghiu street, in April 1950. APOSTOL Gheorghe and General DONCEA (fnu) in uniform went shopping there the same morning.

These stores look like private houses as they have no luminous signs or "for sale" signs anywhere, and the front door being always locked. On ringing the doorbell a

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a plain-clothes man opens the door and asks to see the ration card and checks the time on it. The buyer is taken into a room, where the goods are on exhibit but have no prices marked on them. The whole "shop" is elegantly furnished and has carpets and window curtains adding to its appearance.

This store sell lovely carp (fish) at 172 Lei a kilogram, while the state-stores sell it rationed at 320 Lei and "non-rationed" to the population at 700 Lei a kilogram. SIBIU salami is sold in the state-stores at 600 Lei, while the population has to pay 1,200 Lei for it.

The following goods are plentiful in these stores: all kinds of fish, caviare, veal, chicken, beef, pork, oil, fats, American chocolate, coffee, MAT wine (first quality and not what is sold in the MAT booths) cakes, fruit, cheese, preserved meats, etc.

It must be noted that all the goods in these "special" stores are sold at half price to Central Committee members. Imported dress materials (not from the USSR) of the best quality are to be found in these stores. An important thing must be noticed, that they also sell rationed goods; bread for instance, is not black like it is for the rest of the population, but is almost white and sold at the price of black bread.

EVAL. COMMENT: confirmed by other sources; see Items 5347
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