

JB  
May 14  
XI/1824 E

HUNGARY

FOREIGN RELATIONS (1500)  
Emigrants (1501)

REPATRIATION OF GREEKS.

SOURCE ATHENS: A 43-year-old Greek repatriate priest.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Up to mid-March 1956.

EVALUATION COMMENT: None.

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Red propaganda notwithstanding, there are few Greek exiles in Hungary today who do not ardently wish to be repatriated. Those who do not want to return to Greece are some Party members with criminal records and -- unfortunately -- a large percentage of the younger exiles: children snatched from their homes in Greece at a tender age by raiding guerrillas and sent behind the Iron Curtain to be turned into Communist fanatics. Even among ex-guerrillas themselves the desire to come home is widespread, though often dissimulated.

The Greek Reds are dead set against repatriation but powerless to prevent cleared applicants from going home. Propaganda about wretched conditions and oppression in Greece is not believed by anybody.

To those of the repatriates who are destitute (many exiles still wear the tattered remnants of the clothes in which they left Greece six or seven years ago), the Hungarian Red Cross issues clothing and shoes.

Upon leaving Hungary, repatriates exchange their State loan bonds (representing approximately a month's salary for every  
(over)

year of residence in the country) for cash. This sum is in forints, the authorities allowing only \$ 10 per person (adult or child) in US dollars, purchaseable by the repatriate at 13.30 forints per dollar. As forints are not exportable the repatriate must purchase commodities with the remainder of his cash.

End.