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CRIME IN YUGOSLAVIA

The Yugoslav press has recently been concerned with a purported increase in crimes "against social property and the economy," although other kinds of crime have reportedly decreased. Politika has been publicizing such crimes and criminals and recently invited comment from members of workers' councils, administrative councils of economic enterprises, trade and inspection agencies, and agencies of public prosecution and the courts, so that "these developments may be examined from all sides, and so that the joint experience of all those who guard the people's property can be utilized rapidly and most efficiently to unearth the causes for the existence of the economic criminal and to point out the possibilities of eliminating him (Politika, 16 May 1952).

Crime reporting does not ordinarily occupy much space in the Yugoslav press, but during the discussion mentioned above many articles describing criminal activity were published, especially in Politika, seemingly indicating more than ordinary concern with the problem. The severe sentences, including death by firing squad, handed down by some courts seem to bear out this concern.

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.]

Politika reports that large-scale thefts and embezzlement at the Bor Mine show that stealing has not been limited to workers or minor officials. Here, practically all top officials participated in one way or another in stealing from the enterprise, with one of them revealing party secrets to worm his way into the group.

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Politika states that former collaborators and enemies of the people who infiltrated various establishments after the liberation were to blame for certain thefts.

According to Politika, criminal acts against social property and the economy, consisting of stealing, embezzling, and covering up, have shown a steady increase in Yugoslavia in the past 2 years. The majority of other forms of criminal activity, especially counterrevolutionary activity, have been steadily decreasing. In 1951, thefts of state property constituted 27.7 percent of all thefts. The economy suffered losses of about 345 million dinars through criminal activity. Since losses could not be determined in 7,692 criminal cases, since criminal proceedings are still under way in some cases, and since all losses have not yet been reported to prosecuting agencies, it can be supposed that losses in the socialist sector actually amounted to 600 million dinars. (1) Politika writes that, although such losses have not halted progress, they have been harmful to the Yugoslav economy. (1)

Borba points out that, in considering these manifestations, the rapid development of the socialist sector should be taken into consideration, as well as the fact that the new criminal code enacted in the second half of 1951 makes certain acts formerly punishable by administrative discipline now punishable as criminal acts.

Most criminal acts against the socialist sector have been ones against property. Borba maintains that the most dangerous type of criminal act against the economy is the theft of small amounts of raw or finished products from certain types of enterprises. Such thefts occurred particularly in the textile, leather, and metal industries, being committed mostly by people who had just come from rural areas to work in industry. They occurred particularly where bookkeeping and inventory records were disorganized and dilatory, so that losses were not immediately discovered. Thefts of money coupons for industrial goods, items in great demand, falsification of savings account books, and the like also took place. (2) One of the reasons for this type of criminality dates back to the past /previous to Communist assumption of power/, when easy profits could be attained in various devious ways. (1)

Borba states that criminal acts against farm work cooperatives were mainly thefts of cooperative property, usually agricultural products, livestock, and tools; arbitrary, heedless, and unscrupulous acts against cooperative property; improper conduct in an official position; cutting of trees belonging to cooperatives, and the like.

In 1951, according to Borba, thefts of railroad property and property belonging to other means of transportation were quite numerous, and were boldly accomplished by cutting and destroying lead seals, breaking through the flooring of railroad cars, etc. The perpetrators were mostly persons employed in transportation work, warehousemen, and railroad personnel. They preyed on cars standing in railroad yards, mostly at night.

Criminal acts against general people's property were most often committed by persons employed in enterprises and establishments to whom property was entrusted, especially managers, treasurers, and warehousemen, Borba continues. In an overwhelming majority of cases, thefts and embezzlements were not committed by poor people, but by individuals who wanted an even easier and more luxurious life.

Borba stresses that poor security precautions favor the commission of crimes against socialist property, especially cooperative property, so that an individual does not have to be particularly skillful or daring to steal. Daily occurrences illustrate this point. Some enterprises often oppose security

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measures with the excuse that they lack necessary materials, credit, and the like. Enterprises and establishments frequently employ new personnel who are not well checked, their past history and moral character not being investigated. Inspections of enterprises, cooperatives, and various stores are not made regularly, and when they are made, they are incomplete and insufficiently documented. Supervision is made difficult by disorganized and dilatory bookkeeping (2) and poor inventory records.(1) The division of duties between officials and other persons answerable for materials and finances is not always executed properly, making malfeasance possible and hampering the discovery of the actual culprit. Some enterprise managers thoughtlessly entrust property and large sums of money to persons who are morally weak.(2) Crimes also occur because of the political subversion of cooperative members.(1)



Borba states that, although Yugoslavia's crime and investigation service is steadily progressing, some of the investigators still cannot always see their way through badly mixed up and complicated matters, especially in connection with shortages in general agricultural cooperatives. The proceedings in such cases are slow and inefficient, and often the culprit cannot be found. Consequently, the number of undiscovered criminals is on the rise, especially where the investigation service is unsatisfactory, as in Rijeka, Pula, and other places.(2)

Politika notes that the courts have recently begun an intensified battle against these criminals, not only against the perpetrators but also against those whose behavior in the enterprise or in other places has consciously or unconsciously created favorable conditions for such acts.(1)

The courts, Borba states, have begun taking a stricter attitude in the matter of sentences they impose, although quite a number of unwarrantably mild sentences are still imposed. The srez court in Split recently sentenced the works manager of a dressmaking shop to only 5 months in prison for the theft of dress material worth 400,000 dinars. Alija Muslin, chief of a warehouse in Lopara, who embezzled 135,000 dinars, was given only a suspended sentence. Culprits are often not brought to trial immediately, thus affording them the opportunity to commit additional criminal acts. Enterprises do not report all losses, or do not insist on restitution being made for losses.

Among the morally weak, postwar social conditions and particularly the rapid industrialization of Yugoslavia have led to a jail sentence is losing some of the opprobrium usually attached to it. Following the serving or the remission of their sentences, criminals often are too quickly reinstated into society; the serving of a jail sentence does not present a serious obstacle to their reinstatement. The great number of repetitions of criminal acts can be attributed to this.(2)

Borba states that the attitude of Yugoslav lawmakers is entirely correct toward criminals who have served their sentences. They should be re-employed since it is through work that they can be rehabilitated, but it is wrong to re-employ them in the same occupations or activities where they once violated a trust.

Trade unions and workers' councils usually have not been informed of criminal activity. Since some managers have a faulty understanding of democracy in an enterprise, they lightly excuse thefts which occur in their enterprises and do not report them to the unions or councils concerned.

Borba believes that the new method of administering the means of production and the new method of distributing social income will largely aid workers in enterprises and cooperatives to become more alert and to fight resolutely against dispersion of the people's property. Thus, the number of criminal acts of this nature will be decreased perceptibly.(3)

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Crime in Belgrade

According to Borba, crime has decreased in Belgrade since the first postwar years, until now it is less than 50 percent of the crime rate in 1945; 1946, or 1947. (3) In 1950, 1,800 thieves and embezzlers stole more than 17 million dinars, Politika notes. In 1951, the number of persons committing such acts decreased to 1,457, but the amount stolen increased to 33,799,011 dinars. (4) Borba states that murders for personal gain have been decreasing, and speculation and illegal trade have decreased in comparison with the first postwar years. Immediately after the war, a large number of private commercial activities and small industrial enterprises were privately owned, so that speculation assumed considerable proportions during that time. Consequently, a large number of speculators were arrested and convicted. With the liquidation of the private sector in industry and commerce, such speculation and illegal trade decreased a great deal.

However, theft, fraud, and similar crimes are occurring in great numbers in state and cooperative economic enterprises, Borba continues, and it is this type of crime that presents one of the greatest problems to law enforcement agencies and economic organizations.

Belgrade also has a large number of petty crimes involving the loss of personal property the solution of which is fairly difficult. Law enforcement agencies frequently do not keep a record of petty crimes, and victims fail to report thefts or do not report them immediately.

Borba stresses that the present close cooperation between police and citizens is necessary and must be made closer in the future. (3)

ARRESTS AND PUNISHMENTSSentence Group for Misappropriating Soap and Lime

A group headed by Branko Ivanovic (5), former director of the "Milos Mamic" Compressed Gas and Chemical Products Enterprise (6), were sentenced on 23 May for a series of crimes involving misappropriation and the giving and taking of bribes. Ivanovic was sentenced to 14 years in the penitentiary and 3 years' limitation of civil rights after he completes his sentence.

Engr Aleksandar Jankovic, who misappropriated 720 kilograms of soap and then attempted to escape across the border, was sentenced to 7 years in the penitentiary and 3 years' limitation of civil rights after he completes his sentence. Jankovic said that he attempted to escape because he thought society was against him. However, upon questioning by the public prosecutor he admitted he had been earning 7,000 dinars monthly at one time, and later earned up to 30,000 dinars.

Engr Sima Animovic was sentenced to 18 months in the penitentiary. Svetislav Milosevic, who helped steal the soap and then hid it, was sentenced to 2 years. Miloje Savic, who bought the stolen goods and speculated in them, and gave bribes to Ivanovic and Mirkovic, was sentenced to 9 years in the penitentiary and one years' limitation of civil rights after completion of his sentence. Vase Brankov, who shipped 300 kilograms of lime to Savic, for which he received 41,000 dinars, was sentenced to 4 years in the penitentiary.

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Ljubomir Mirkovic, commercial director of the Directorate of the Chemical Industry (Direkcija hemiske industrije), was sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment for receiving lime. Mechanic Ivan Zivkovic was sentenced to 2 years in jail, Mircelav Josipovic to one year, Bezidar Jorgacevic to one year, and Milija Babic to 10 months.

All defendants received credit for time already served while awaiting trial.(5)

Arrest Officials of Pancevo Srez Hotel Enterprise

The Commission of the Interior (Poverenistvo unutrasnjih poslova) in Pancevo arrested a group of officials of the Srez Hotel Enterprise (Sresko ugostiteljsko preduzece) who had been wantonly plundering the enterprise's property.

The group was led by Dusan Sknepnak, head inventory clerk, who engineered the sale of beverages for his own profit. Without authorization, he issued 170 liters of the enterprise's whisky to Marko Zigic, manager of a hotel in Starcevo. When the whisky was sold, they divided the proceeds. Janko Bires, chief bookkeeper of the enterprise, was an accomplice in the affair.

Sknepnak and Bires blackmailed Sergije Ramjanac, the manager of a hotel in Sefkerin, telling him they would expose a supposed shortage of 80,000 dinars in his accounts if he did not agree to purchase beverages from them. Ramjanac agreed and bought 200 liters of whisky and 260 liters of wine, the proceeds of which were then divided three ways.

Vasa Sican, manager of a hotel in Novo Selo, had an actual shortage of 400,000 dinars which was not exposed because Sknepnak and Bires covered it up. Sican was given beverages worth 143,000 dinars so that he could pay back the shortage out of his part of the "profits," while Bires and Sknepnak received 52,000 dinars. At the hearings Bires complained that Sknepnak had not "honestly" divided the proceeds from such undertakings.(1)

Sentence Officials and Members of Trnjani People's Council

After a 5-day trial, the district court in Pozarevac on 14 May sentenced three officials and 13 members of the Municipal People's Council of Trnjani. The officials were Jaroslav Trailovic, president, Cedomir Milanovic, secretary, and Borivoje Ivanovic.

These 16 members of the council were responsible for 27 thefts and malfeasances of duty during the past 3 years. In addition to thefts in their own village, they stole two wagons of hay from the "Crvena Zvezda" Farm Work Cooperative in Pozarevac and a cord of wood from the farm work cooperative in Smoljinac. Even the gypsies, members of a cooperative mill, were not spared but lost 30 kilograms of pork, 20 kilograms of cheese, 80 kilograms of flour, and other things.

Jaroslav Trailovic was sentenced to 10 years in the penitentiary, Cedomir Milanovic to 12, and Borivoje Ivanovic to 13 years. The other defendants were sentenced to from 6 months to 4 years in the penitentiary, except for Ljubisav Milosevic, who was set free because of insufficient evidence.(1)

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Sentence Social Welfare Commission Employee

Jovan Krnjaj, an employee of the Commission for Social Welfare of the People's Council in Zemun Srez, was sentenced by the Zemun Srez Court on 20 May for stealing and spending the money of minors which had been entrusted to him for safekeeping. He spent 18,000 dinars belonging to Slobodanka Zivanovic, and 39,082 dinars belonging to Slavica Zivanovic, which should have been deposited in a savings account with the People's Bank; and 4,000 dinars belonging to minors Purica and Andjelka Samardzic.

Because of the gravity of his crime, the court sentenced Krnjaj to 5 years in the penitentiary and ordered him to refund the stolen money. In a previous trial, he was sentenced to 10 months in jail for spending money intended for children's vacations.(7)

Sentence Group for Large-Scale Thefts of Copper Wire

The Belgrade District (okruzni) Court, presided over by Judge Dimitrije Miloradovic, pronounced sentence on 30 June on a group of copper wire thieves and their accomplices.(8) The wire, destined for use in high-tension transmission lines, was stolen from the "Elektro-Srbija" State Enterprise (Drzavno poduzece "Elektro-Srbija"), which had left it unguarded in a field in Trstenik.(3)

At least 1,000 people came to hear the sentences imposed, filling the court chambers, the hallways, and the street outside.(8) The defendants all worked for the enterprise and had sold great quantities of the wire at cheap prices from March to August 1951, receiving about 7,400,000 dinars for it.(3)

Djurdje Borisavljevic, Bogdan Ilic, Mihajlo Milijanovic, and Azir Kijevecanin were sentenced to death by firing squad, permanent limitation of civil rights /depriving heirs of the deceased of certain rights?, and confiscation of all their property. Petar Milic, who also participated in stealing the wire, was sentenced to 18 years in the penitentiary and 3 years' limitation of civil rights. Milan Bjelic was sentenced to 10 years in the penitentiary and one years' limitation of civil rights; Ivan Vucicevic, 12 years in the penitentiary and one years' limitation of civil rights; Marko Jovanovic, 10 years in the penitentiary and one years' limitation of civil rights; Dragoslav Jovanovic, 8 years in the penitentiary and one years' limitation of civil rights; and Nikola Kracunovic, 6 years in the penitentiary and one years' limitation of civil rights. The remaining six defendants received sentences ranging from 10 months to 2 years in either jail or the penitentiary. Except for the first five, the others did not participate directly in stealing, but purchased the wire at cheap prices, although they knew that it was stolen.

All the defendants were ordered to pay the "Elektro-Srbija" Enterprise full damages, amounting to more than 25.5 million dinars (8) -- value computed at current prices (3) -- and were ordered to pay court costs.(8)

Politika raised the question of whether the negligence of directors of the enterprise who were responsible for leaving the wire unguarded for 5 months should have been overlooked.(3)

Sentence Embezzlers

Milovan Ivankovic, employed by the "Ujarica" Oil Enterprise, which purchases oil-bearing crops, was sentenced to 2 years in the penitentiary for embezzling 100,000 dinars. Ivankovic worked simultaneously in banking and warehouse activities, which is illegal according to Yugoslav financial laws.(3)

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Momcilo Durovic, employed by the "Sumadija" Enterprise for Office Equipment (Poduzece za kancelarijski materijal "Sumadija"), was previously sentenced to 7 months in the penitentiary for embezzlement. After Durovic had served his sentence, he was re-employed by the City Jobbers' Enterprise (Poduzece "Gradska spedicija"), where he embezzled a large sum of money. Because of this, and because of several burglaries of public property and participation in another robbery, he was sentenced to 7 years in the penitentiary. (3)

Sentence Burglars

A group of burglars, who stole from the Belgrade Department Store (Prodavnica Beogradski Magazin) on Maxim Gorki Ulica a total of 700,000 dinars in cash and coupons and two wrist watches, were sentenced by the Belgrade District Court.

Petar Tasoncevic was sentenced to 18 years in the penitentiary and 3 years' limitation of civil rights; Vlastimir "Beta" Aleksin, student, and Miodrag Spasojevic, a medical laboratory technician, were sentenced to 16 years in the penitentiary and 2 years' limitation of civil rights. Djordje Popovic was sentenced to 10 years in the penitentiary and one year's limitation of civil rights. Stanimir Simic, a bartender called "Sumider," was sentenced to 2½ years in the penitentiary, while Milos Basta, an official of the store, was acquitted. (9)

Sentence Group of Forgers and Speculators After Lengthy Trial

After a 14-day trial, the Belgrade District Court on 29 May sentenced a group of forgers and speculators who had caused the government over 2 million dinars' damage through fraud and forgery. Almost an hour was needed to enumerate their criminal acts before the court.

The group, organized by Predrag Radosavljevic, made up false requisitions which contained the names of nonexistent executives and directors, on the basis of which they procured various metal products at low prices, and sold them to enterprises and establishments at higher prices. According to Politika, their crime was considered very serious because they had dealt in products which were in short supply at that time, when particular attention was being paid to issuing them on the basis of priorities.

Radosavljevic was sentenced to death by firing squad and permanent limitation of civil rights. Slobodan Kandic was sentenced to 18 years in the penitentiary. Ivan Milosevic was sentenced to life in the penitentiary and limitation of civil rights. Radomir Ristic, former merchant characterized by the court as being a "man from the former society with former attitudes," who was some sort of financier and celebrity in the group, was sentenced to 14 years in the penitentiary and 3 years' limitation of civil rights. Zivcjin Najdanovic was sentenced to 6 years in the penitentiary and one year's limitation of civil rights. Dragoljub Sisovic was sentenced to 18 months and Peter Radosavljevic to 6 months in the penitentiary.

Radosavljevic, Kandic, Sisovic, and Ristic were ordered to repay some 674,000 dinars to some of the enterprises and corporations concerned. The other enterprises involved were advised to file civil suits to collect damages. (10)

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Embezzlements in Cooperatives

Data collected by the Revisory Service (revizorska sluzba), the public prosecutors, courts, and people's councils shows that the economic criminal has begun to operate in the cooperatives in the Banat.

The woman treasurer of the "4 Oktobar" Farm Work Cooperative in Livade destroyed financial paper and misappropriated 40,000 dinars of the cooperative's money. Pavel Zurm, foreman of the agricultural cooperative in Begejci, "borrowed" 711,000 dinars from the cooperative. Twelve officials of the agricultural cooperative in Farkazdin are to be turned over to the prosecutor for embezzling 470,000 dinars.

Borba points out that light sentences handed down by individual srez courts do not help combat such criminals. The srez court in Kikinda sentenced a foreman to 2 months in jail for embezzling 43,000 dinars, while the srez court in Zrenjanin handed down a suspended sentence of one month in jail for the embezzlement of 50,000 dinars. Of 33 sentences handed down by the srez court in Vrsac recently, 21 were suspended sentences.

Poor functioning of the revisory services in cooperative councils has also permitted frequent embezzlements and cover-ups. Until the recent reorganization took place, many cooperative councils had only one or two revisors. Some srezes, such as Tamisko, have cooperatives which have not been audited since 1947.

In many villages in the Banat, thieves and squanderers of social property in cooperatives are being exposed and prosecuted by the srez cooperative council agencies, the people's authorities, and the public prosecutors, but there are few instances of thieves being discovered or turned over to the courts by cooperative members.

There have been cases where individual representatives of the people's authorities unwittingly became participants in the work of various speculators and wrongdoers. In Novi Knezevac a group of former managers of cooperatives made huge profits from financial machinations and falsifications. Because of surpluses, considerable quantities of ski boots were manufactured and sold principally to srez and town leaders at 400 dinars a pair. None of the leaders was alert enough to ask why the boots were being sold at ten times less than their real value.

The district public prosecutor in Zrenjanin reports that the administrative councils of some cooperatives even refuse damages awarded them by the courts. Individual councils of some cooperatives stubbornly propose that wrongdoers be absolved of paying financial damages.

Party organizations in many villages have thus far taken no serious steps to develop a consciousness among cooperative members to look upon cooperative property as they do upon their own. It has not been sufficiently emphasized that embezzlement, stealing, and misuse of cooperative property harms the cooperative members first of all, and impedes the development of farm work cooperatives and the socialist transformation of villages.{11}

Bor Mine Officials Steal Millions

Bureau of the Interior agencies recently exposed and arrested a large group of embezzlers in the Bor Mine and Smelter Enterprise (poduzeca Borskih rudnika i topionice), who stole millions of dinars over a long period of time.

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Most of the embezzlements occurred in the smelter. Vidoje Bajic, chief of the smelter's payroll division, and Cedomir Velickovic, Anje Markovic, Josip Ortman, and Vlasta Videnovic, officials of the smelter, committed the embezzling by fraudulently increasing the earnings of workers in payroll records. After paying actual wages due workers, they kept the difference. When submitting to the economic accounting sector a monthly recapitulation of the amount of money needed [for expenses], they fraudulently raised the figures by 200,000 to 300,000 dinars, and kept the difference. In October 1951, they increased their account by 990,000 dinars, which they kept.

Data thus far verified shows that the group caused 15 million dinars' damage to the enterprise. Of this sum, 4,124,976 dinars were stolen in 1950 and 7,200,000 dinars in 1951. It is believed that the total amount is considerably more.

By fraudulently increasing the results of each man's work, e.g., reporting a greater number of tons than was actually mined, the group skillfully raised production figures, forcing the mine to contribute a larger amount to the accumulation fund.

The group almost regularly misappropriated wages due to but not claimed by workers when they quit in the middle of a month to go home or to some other enterprise.

The embezzlers were aided by their accomplices and friends in the enterprise directorate, including Matija Brkan, director of the economic accounting sector, Nenad Dunic, head accountant, Dusan Jelenkovic, head treasurer, and Zarko Videnovic, bookkeeper, who verified falsified payrolls and approved them for payment. In return, they received various gifts, industrial coupons, money, food, and other items.

Matija Brkan, Nenad Dunic, and Dusan Jelenkovic requisitioned 75,000 industrial coupons more than necessary to pay the workers, and the three divided them equally. Brkan also stole 10,000 dinars from the manager's fund, and together with Dunic organized the theft of curtains and other items from the enterprise.(12) After Bajic's arrest, Dunic was a member of the commission which audited the work of the accused. Dunic reported there were no shortages, although he was considered the most expert official in financial matters at Bor.(13)

Politika reports that after the liberation various enemies of the people infiltrated individual establishments and the Bor Mine under the guise of technicians. They favored each other and created a situation wherein they could steal without fear of exposure. Brkan, Dunic, and Markovic collaborated with the Germans during the war, while Velickovic, Bajic, Lazic, Petrovic, and Nikodija Djordjevic, who also participated in the stealing, were either Chetniks or belonged to other similar groups during the war.

Vidoje Bajic said that the members of his immediate family knew he was stealing; his wife upbraided him once, but nonetheless took the money for safekeeping. He said that his father privately advised him to continue stealing, for the social order would soon be changed and they could live well on the proceeds.

Vidoje Bajic confessed that he personally misappropriated 4.5 million dinars, Cedomir Velickovic 3.8 million dinars, and Jozef Ortman 1,050,000 dinars. The accused lived luxuriously. Bajic and Velickovic had five radios, a large quantity of gold, 30 bolts of dry goods totaling 90 meters, and 30 pairs of nylon stockings. Each of them had 30 suits, 50 shirts, 30 pairs of shoes, and other items. Both of them also built fine new homes.(12) Bajic had been living with six women, in addition to his wife.(13)

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All the stolen items were confiscated and returned to the enterprise, which put them on display in a large barracks. The items included bedroom furniture of light maple, very luxurious carved oak furniture, dinner services, different kinds of vases, and a large quantity of clothing. (12)

Bajic, one of the ringleaders in the group, admitted his part and described the methods employed to accomplish the embezzlement and theft, which was made easier because the smelter accounts had not been audited during all the time Bajic worked there.

Milan Ivkovic first began falsifying the payroll records, but was soon detected by Bajic, who also began stealing. Bajic's thefts showed a steady increase and ranged from 15,000 dinars in June 1948 to 660,000 dinars in November 1950. Bajic, in turn, was detected by Velickovic, who overcame Bajic's reluctance to show him the method employed by telling him his most intimate secrets, even the substance of party meetings.

The smelter manager detected the payroll falsifications and passed the information on to Ante Markovic, who received 100,000 dinars, lambs, blood sausage, grain, wine, and whisky for concealing the discovery. (13)

The workers belonging to the union at Bor have sent a written request to the srez public prosecutor that the accused be given the severest punishment. (12)

#### Courts Discuss Crime

An article in Borba states that the discussions of crime at the conference of presidents and judges of district and srez courts of Kosovo-Metohija, held in Pristina on 6 June, indicate the seriousness with which the increase in crimes against social property is viewed.

Among others, the conference was attended by Dr Josip Hrnacovic, President of the Supreme Court of Yugoslavia, Svetislav Lazarevic, President of the Supreme Court of Serbia, and Branko Sesic, assistant to the Minister of Justice of Serbia.

The conference pointed out that the recent increase in the number of thefts of people's property has come about, in part, because srez and even district courts have meted out light punishment for such crimes. For example, the srez court in Pristina punished a person for embezzling 600,000 dinars with a total of 18 months' imprisonment, and another who embezzled 105,000 dinars with 6 months' imprisonment. One srez court in the jurisdiction of the Prizren District Court punished a person who caused damages of 140,000 dinars with a fine of 6,000 dinars. The harm caused by such actions of individual courts was pointed out at the conference, as well as the need for future punishment which should be measured according to the seriousness of the crime.

Improvement in the work of the courts was also discussed, for there are many cases still waiting to be heard by some courts. For example, the district court in Peci has about 700 cases to be heard. (14)

#### SOURCES

1. Belgrade, Politika, 16 May 52
2. Zagreb, Borba, 7 Apr 52 [article signed by Marijan Vivoda]
3. Ibid., 24 Mar 52 [article signed by M. Dostanic]

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4. Politika, 28 Jun 52
5. Ibid., 24 May 52
6. Ibid., 15 May 52
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9. Ibid., 28 May 52
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11. Borba, 28 Jun 52 [article signed by J. P.]
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