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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Yugoslavia

DATE DISTR. 11 October 1951

SUBJECT Yugoslav Penal Institutions; Sremska Mitrovica, Lepoglava and Pozarevec

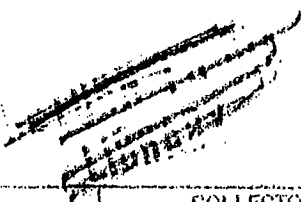
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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.



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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE Through a fairly reliable source from untested informants who have been confined in the penitentiaries in question.

Part I. Sremska Mitrovica Penitentiary

1. The "Kazneno Propavni Dom Mitrovica" (The Penal and Correctional House of Mitrovica), is located a short distance from the town of Mitrovica in Serbia. The classification of prisoners, prison conditions, administration, and the physical description of the Penitentiary which follow below are reported as those existing prior to 1 January 1951.
2. On 31 December 1950 the estimated number of prisoners confined in the Penitentiary is reported as 3,340. In addition to this number, 200 are said to be employed on a farm in the region and have been assigned a status analogous to that of trustees. These are designated as being under the administration of the Penitentiary. Also under the administration of Sremska Mitrovica there is allegedly a large but undetermined number of prisoners who are merely registered there but who have been organized into labor groups and utilized in construction projects at the following places:
  - a. Novi Beograd
  - b. The mines at Bor and Trepca, and Kostolac.
  - c. Cement factory at Beocin.
  - d. Economic enterprises under the Ministry of the Interior at Dabanovci.
  - e. Several factories at Zemun and Belgrade.
  - f. The Partisan Road from Belgrade to Smederevo.
  - g. An irrigation project at Lonjsko Polje.
  - h. Constructions in the vicinities of Rijeka, Susak and Opatija.
3. The prisoners are classified according to the offenses or crimes for which they have been sentenced in the following manner:
  - a. Special political offenders: This category includes prisoners who were former politicians in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, such as Lazica Markovic, Stankovic and Perovic, former members of the National Committee of Draga Mihajlovic (approximately 40) and Dragoljub Jovanovic. The persons confined in this section are more severely treated than the other prisoners. They are segregated from the others, do not perform any work and are fed very meager rations.

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- b. Cominformists: This group is sub-divided into two categories:
- 1) Approximately 100, considered to be less dangerous, are located in "Barracks II". They do not work.
  - 2) A group of the more dangerous are located in "Barracks III". These are reportedly the higher officials among the Cominformists and receive relatively privileged treatment. They are served special food, are completely segregated from the other prisoners and are not forced to crop their hair to conform with prison regulations. It is reported that this preferential treatment has given rise to conjectures among the others as to the genuineness of the Tito-Stalin schism.
- c. Old political offenders: This group of prisoners consists principally of Cetniks; however there are some Ustashi and some of the followers of Ljotic among them. They are not segregated and receive the same treatment as other prisoners.
- d. New political offenders: According to source this group of prisoners comprises "spies for the Western Powers", saboteurs, peasants who failed to surrender the prescribed quota of their produce to the State, and various other offenses committed against the regime. It is also noted that most of the uncooperative peasants are usually remanded to Pozarevac (see Part XII) or sent directly to work projects as described above. Peasants interned here are numbered at approximately 100.
- e. Criminals: It is reported that there are a large number of persons convicted of crimes serving sentences in the Penitentiary and that these convicts are not segregated from political offenders.
- f. German prisoners of war: The source reports that there were approximately 1000 of these in Sremska Mitrovica who had been transferred there from Vrsac in 1949. Of those who were thus transferred 80 had been condemned to death as war criminals, but of these only 30 have been executed while the remainder have had their sentences commuted to prison terms. All German prisoners who had been originally sentenced for a period of 15 years or less have subsequently been released and repatriated; however, those who were serving longer sentences are still in the Penitentiary and their number is estimated as being small.
- g. Penitentiary Directorate:
- a. The Director is Dusan Milenkovic. Reportedly he was a major during World War II, is presently a civilian and a member of the Communist Party.
  - b. The Deputy Director is a certain Major Grbic. He and his assistant represent the UDB in the Penitentiary.
  - c. A certain Peric is the Assistant Deputy Director. He is an officer whose rank is unknown.
  - d. The Penitentiary Registry Office employs from five to six persons, male and female.
  - e. The Supervisor of Prisoners is a certain Nikolic. He is believed to be a member of the Communist Party.
  - f. The superintendent of work shops and labor groups is a certain Kovacevic, also believed to be a Communist Party member.

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5. The "Dubrava" is a penitentiary business enterprise which markets various prison made articles. It comprises the following shops:
  - a. Carpentry and Upholstery: Reported to employ 500 prisoners who manufacture furniture for the Penitentiary as well as for public sale.
  - b. Shoe shop: Reported to employ from 250 to 300 prisoners.
  - c. Locksmith shop: Here hardware for the Carpentry shop is produced in addition to locks for public consumption. It employs 120 prisoners.
  - d. Rope shop: Reported to employ about 200 prisoners in the manufacture of all types of rope and cord.
  - e. Brick Kiln: According to source 380 prisoners were employed in the manufacture of bricks in the Summer of 1950. During the winter approximately 40 prisoners and a few trustees are employed on the project.
6. The Penitentiary maintains an Automobile Repair Shop for the Ministry of Internal Affairs. In charge of this project is a UDB major. This shop employs from 160 to 180 prisoners under the supervision of personnel from the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The types of repair work include complete overhauling and the installation of spare parts.
7. The Penitentiary manages an Agricultural Project which is operated as follows:
  - a. Approximately 200 prisoners described as "free workers" cultivate a farm several kilometers from the town.
  - b. Other prisoners work the fields in the Penitentiary area as the need arises.
8. A number of prisoners are assigned to the maintenance and service of the Penitentiary as well as to various workshops producing articles for internal use. These comprise the following:
  - a. Tailor shop - approximately 50 prisoners.
  - b. Shoe shop - from 12 to 14 prisoners.
  - c. Book bindery - 6 prisoners.
  - d. Photography - 2 prisoners.
  - e. Locksmith shop - 60 prisoners.
  - f. Electrical shop - 10 prisoners.
  - g. Bakery - 14 prisoners.
  - h. Kitchen - from 20 to 30 prisoners.
  - i. Laundry - 20 prisoners.
  - j. Water plant - from 5 to 6 prisoners.
  - k. Thermoelectric power station - from 5 to 6 prisoners (The station was built in 1950 thus enabling the Penitentiary to produce its own power).
  - l. Central heating plant - from 5 to 6 prisoners.
  - m. Carpentry shop - approximately 50 prisoners.
  - n. Wood carving shop - from 8 to 10 prisoners.

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9. The Prison Infirmary is reportedly operated by prisoner personnel. These include from 4 to 5 physicians and 8 male attendants. The infirmary, according to the estimate of one source, has facilities to accommodate approximately 100 patients.
10. Technical advice for prison labor projects is supplied by the Technical Bureau which is a group consisting of prisoner personnel exclusively. The 14 members of the Bureau are construction engineers, mechanical engineers and electrotechnicians; moreover, they are charged with the supervision of all technical projects.
11. Sremska Mitrovica is guarded by a militia unit under the command of a captain who is known to the source only by his nickname, Dika ("The Proud"). The unit's strength is numbered at 13 officers and from 250 to 300 militiamen. Included in their duties are assignments as guards, turkeys, sentinel commanders, building commanders, and warehouse commanders. The most inhuman militiamen are the building commanders, according to the source, who adds that they are also the most rabid Communists.
12. The source reports the following conditions of prison life at Sremska Mitrovica:
- a. Food: Working prisoners receive "Ration No. 1" which consists of 600 grams of corn bread and a quantity of thick soup per day or "Ration No. 2" consisting of 400 grams of corn bread and a thinner soup. The ration for non-workers amounts to 200 grams of corn bread and some watery soup.
  - b. Lodgings: The buildings in which the prisoners are confined are over-crowded. Most of them sleep on the floor and some have some straw or straw mattresses. Each prisoner is allotted about 37 square centimeters of space. A few of the prisoners are assigned to rooms equipped with double-decker bunks; however, these rooms are reported to be used for display purposes.
  - c. Sanitation: Sanitation is said to be almost non-existent. Medical attention is practically non-existent; consequently, most prisoners must request drugs and medicine from their relatives. The death rate is high, it being reported that there is a death every other day caused principally by tuberculosis, avitaminosis, pneumonia, as well as from the effects of torture and corporal punishment.
  - d. Communication with friends and relatives: Each prisoner is permitted to write one letter on the first and fifteenth day of each month. However, this correspondence is strictly censored, which process causes it to be delayed for about ten days.

Part II Lepoglava Penitentiary

13. The "Kazneno Propavni Dom Lepoglava" (Penal and Correctional House of Lepoglava) is located in Croatia. The prison administration, conditions and physical description of the Penitentiary which follow reflect the situation existing prior to May 1950, according to the source.
14. The source reports that there were 1850 permanent prisoners in Lepoglava on 1 May 1950 and that of this number 1400 were registered during the year 1950. The inmates are classified according to the following categories:
- a. Old political offenders: This group includes former members of the Ustasha and Domobran, the former Croatian home guard militia under Pavelic.
  - b. New political offenders: The prisoners in this category have been sentenced for offenses against the present regime such as attempted illegal passage across the frontier.

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- c. **Cominformists:** The majority of the prisoners under this classification are high ranking government and military officers. The Cominformists are completely isolated from the other prisoners and are permitted a short walk around the prison yard only at night. Access to the section of the Penitentiary in which they are confined is gained by a separate entrance and stairway and cannot be used by other prisoners. The Cominformists are fed and attended by militiamen exclusively. It is reported that Archbishop Stepinac is incarcerated with this group.
  - d. **Peasants:** This group is composed of those who have failed to yield their assigned quotas of grain to the Government.
  - e. **Criminals:** The members of this group were convicted for non-political crimes, e.g., smuggling, black marketing, et cetera.
15. The Directorate of Lepoglava Penitentiary is headed by a certain Spiranae, a major from Zagorje. The office of the Director is open to militiamen, prison employes and those prisoners who have requests to make. Under the Directorate there are the following departments:
- a. **Records department:** Its function is the maintenance of the prison archives and the case histories of the prisoners, which include court decisions pertaining thereto.
  - b. **Statistical department.**
  - c. **Financial department.**
  - d. **Administrative department:** This office registers the names of all prisoners and takes their finger prints.
16. The Penitentiary manages and administers several work projects among which are the following:
- a. **Internal projects:** A saw mill, a lumber planing mill, a carpentry shop and a ceramic shop.
  - b. **Projects outside the Penitentiary:**
    - 1) A stone quarry.
    - 2) Construction work on a new plant.
    - 3) Construction work on quarters for the militiamen.
17. Lepoglava operates an Agricultural Project which is worked by "half free" prisoners. These trusties return to the Penitentiary at the end of each working day.
18. An undisclosed number of prisoners are employed in the following prison workshops and maintenance services:
- a. Rope shop
  - b. Leather shop
  - c. Basket weaving shop
  - d. Tailor shop
  - e. Shoe shop
  - f. Mechanized carpentry shop
  - g. Machine shop
  - h. Cabinet making shop
  - i. Wood carving shop
  - j. Dyeing shop
  - k. Lumber processing shop
  - l. Electrical power plant
  - m. Garages
  - n. Welding shop
  - o. Kitchen
  - p. Bakery
  - q. Bathhouse
  - r. Laundry
  - s. Sanitation service

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19. The infirmary and clinic quarantine all newly arrived prisoners for an undisclosed period. The source reports that patients afflicted with diseases which require hospitalization, such as tuberculosis, are confined in the clinic.
20. Lepoglava is guarded by a militia unit which comprises from 150 to 180 men. The militia men mount all of the sentinel posts in addition to posts within the penitentiary. Every floor is in the charge of a militia commander and his aide. There are also 20 UDB agents assigned to the Penitentiary.
21. Data relating to the management of prisoners and their treatment:
- Upon commitment to the Penitentiary, the individuals condemned are relieved of their civilian clothing, personal effects and documents. These are stored in a warehouse and returned to the prisoners when they are released.
  - At the beginning and end of each day the prisoners are grouped and counted.
  - Breaches of discipline are punished by solitary confinement.
  - The prisoners are allegedly provided with cultural, educational and musical centers. They have a glee club, classrooms, libraries, a theater and cinemahall. There is a Catholic Church in the Penitentiary for their use.
22. A physical description of Lepoglava:
- In the center of the main prison building there is a tower, the first and second story of which are mounted with heavy machine guns. There are two machine guns on each of these floors.
  - There is a separate wooden construction where the militia commanders conduct a prisoner count before they go to work and when they return to the Penitentiary.
  - The militiamen are housed in special colonies with accommodations for single members and for married members and their families. The militia maintains its own cooperative and a hotel to accommodate any visitors they may have.

Part III Pozarevac Penitentiary

23. Pozarevac Penitentiary is located in Serbia not far from Belgrade. The classification of prisoners, prison administration and activities, conditions and the physical description of the Penitentiary which follow are described by the source to be those existing prior to 1 January 1950.
24. There are reported to be 15000 prisoners confined in the Penitentiary who are classified according to the following categories:
- Old political offenders: This group consists of Chetniks, the followers of Ljotic, and collaborators during World War II.
  - New political offenders: In this category there are persons sentenced for rebellion, sabotage, espionage, participation in illegal secret political societies and the maintenance of connections with the Government in exile.
  - Cominformists: The majority in this group are army officers and State officials. They are segregated from the other prisoners and receive relatively mild treatment. These prisoners work on a voluntary basis, receive better rations and are not subjected to disciplinary action.
  - Approximately 600 prisoners have been convicted of crimes having no connection with politics.

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- e. The source identifies the following prisoners: Vlada Ilic, Bosko Jerolic, reportedly a ship owner from Belgrade, and a certain Teokarevic.
25. The Directorate and administration of Pozarevac Penitentiary.
- a. The Director of the Penitentiary is Voja Niketic from Kragujevac. Prior to World War II Niketic was a skilled worker in a military technical factory in Kragujevac. He held the rank of colonel in the army, is a member of the Communist Party and joined the Partisans as early as 1941. He is described as being a tall, dark complexioned man with dark eyes and a small mustache. He wears civilian clothes and owns an automobile. Niketic is reputed to be a stern disciplinarian who terrorizes the prisoners and who is allegedly guilty of the deaths of many of them.
- b. The Penitentiary Registry Office employs civilians of both sexes as well as prisoners. Among the 4 to 5 prisoners who are employed here there is said to be a condemned priest named Boris Livakov from the region of Vrsac. Livakov, according to source, collaborates with the UDB in the Penitentiary as an informer.
- c. The Statistic Department also employs civilians along with 4 or 5 prisoners.
26. Pozarevac Penitentiary manages the following major construction projects:
- a. 500 prisoners are employed in the construction of apartment houses for married militiamen and civilian employees of the Penitentiary.
- b. 300 prisoners are employed in the construction of a new factory within the Penitentiary enclosure.
- c. An undisclosed number of prisoners are assigned to the following projects:
- 1) The Belgrade-Smederov road
  - 2) The Novi Beograd road
  - 3) Various factories and enterprises in Belgrade and Zemun.
  - 4) The mines at Kostolac, Bor, Trepca and Crn Vrh.
  - 5) A project at Prahovo
  - 6) Unloading barges near Pozarevac
27. The economic and business enterprise of the Penitentiary is known as the "Preporod", the management of which is staffed with civilian personnel. The enterprise operates the following shops which manufacture articles for distribution in the penitentiary and for public sale to civilian cooperatives:
- a. Tailor shop: Reported to employ approximately 300 prisoners.
- b. Carpentry and upholstery shop, reported to employ approximately 100 prisoners.
- c. Auto repair and locksmith shop, reported to employ about 200 prisoners.
- d. Textile shop: This shop produces linen and clothing material and is reported to employ about 100 prisoners.
- e. Rope shop: Reported to employ 50 prisoners. The shop sells its product to civilian enterprises.
- f. Toy making shop: Reported to employ 400 prisoners. The shop sells to civilian cooperatives.

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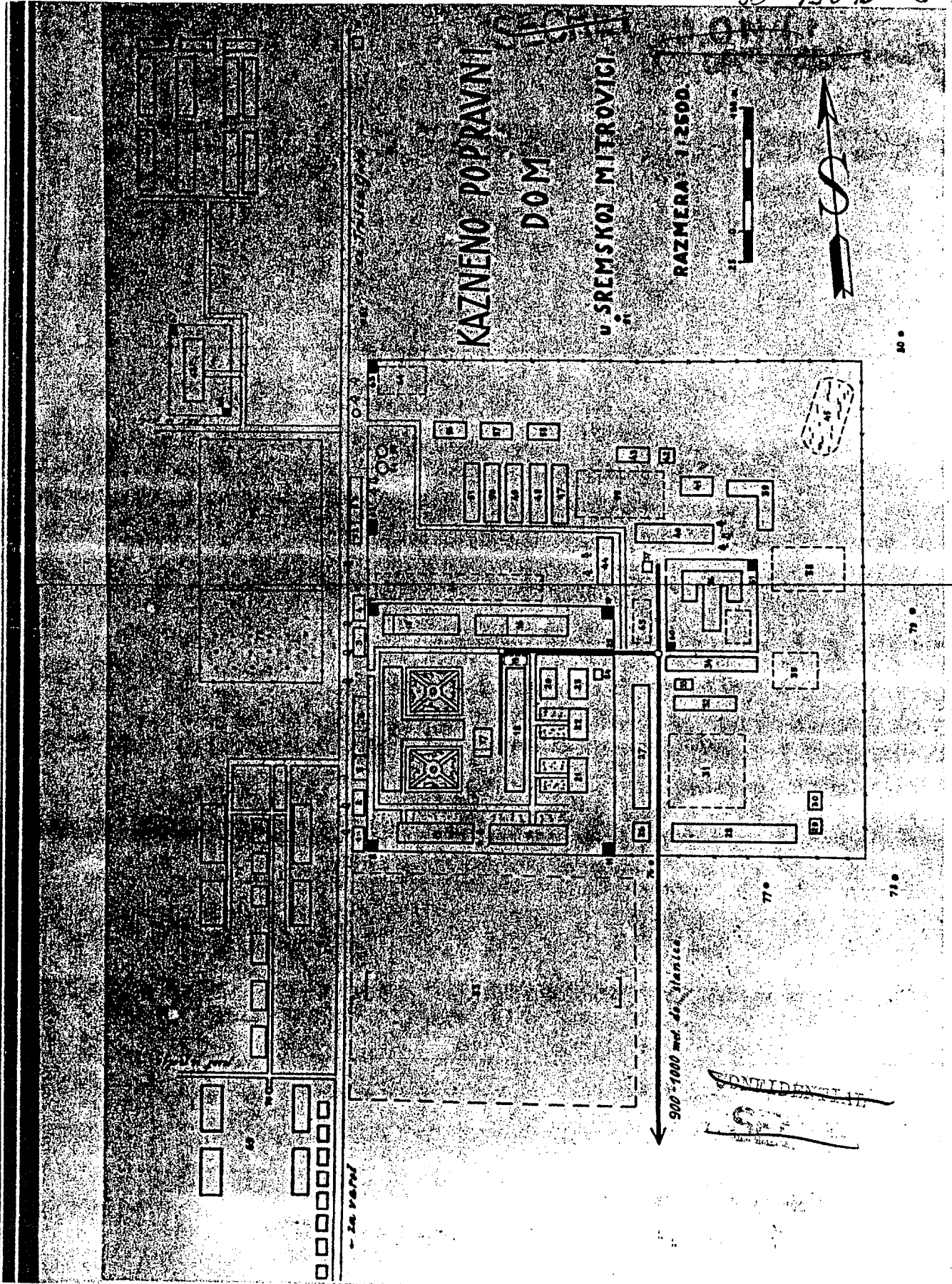
28. The militia guard unit numbers 500 militiamen and approximately 20 officers. The militia commander is a Major between 35 and 40 years of age, a Party member. The following Militiamen were attached to the penitentiary:
- a. Standard Bearer Popivoda, a Montenegrin and a sadist, who allegedly was later imprisoned in Sremaka Mitrovica Penitentiary himself for unlawful shooting and rape of prisoners. A Party member and Partisan since 1941, he is about 40 years old, tall and thin, with black eyes, a small mustache and with aquiline features.
  - b. Senior platoon chief Obradovic, a Party member and in charge of all penitentiary keys. A sadist who has gained the confidence of his superiors by terrorizing the prisoners. He is from Srem and is about 30 years old; of medium height, he is blonde and blue-eyed.
29. The UDB is directed by a Captain Obradovic who personally conducts investigations and is known for his sadism. He has organized an information net among employees, militiamen and prisoners and is assisted by two aids. The left hand of Obradovic is stiff and curved.
30. The food ration for heavy duty workers is 600 grams of black bread and a thick soup; for lighter duty workers the ration is 450 grams of black bread and a lighter soup; for those prisoners not working 200 grams of black bread and a watery soup are allowed. Exhaustion, inadequate food, avitaminosis, tuberculosis and torture account for a heavy death rate. After serving their terms prisoners are released, but only a few are released on request. There were no amnesties. Some shock workers working outside the Penitentiary grounds were recently released in groups and some prisoners condemned for old political crimes have been pardoned, but only a few prisoners sentenced for new political crimes have been pardoned.

Washington Comment: There are available in the CIA Library several sketches of the prisons discussed above which can be furnished upon request.

Washington Comment: For earlier disseminations on penitentiaries in Yugoslavia your attention is called to SO-64403, SO-43535 and SO-57916. It will be noted that in some instances the above report contains divergent information on the treatment of political prisoners, especially alleged Cominformists.



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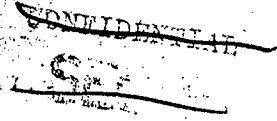
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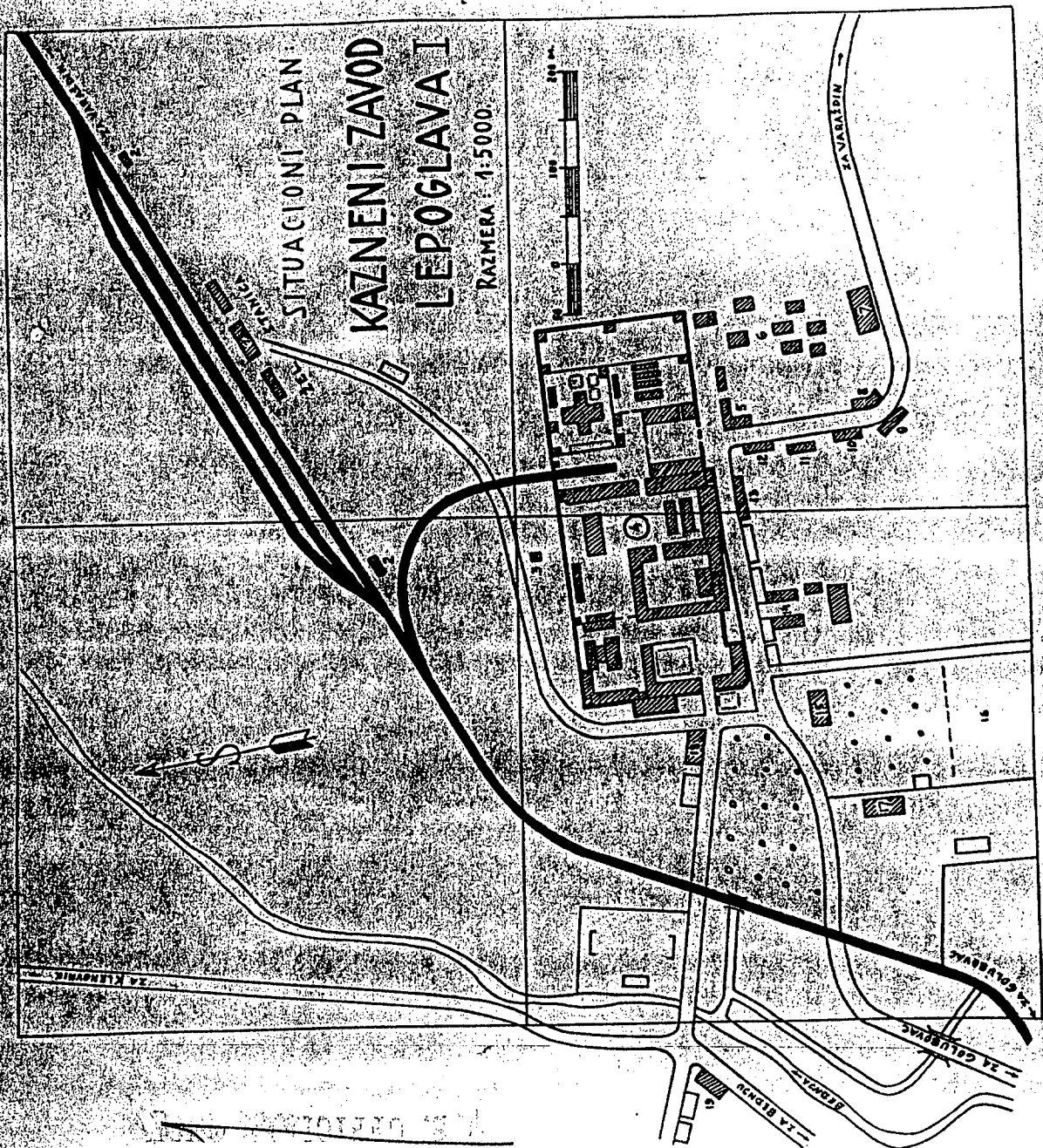
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