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Imaš kuću – vrati stan. **Housing inequalities, socialist morality and discontent in 1980s Yugoslavia**

Abstract: The widespread abuse of socially owned apartments and a perennial housing shortage in Yugoslavia prompted the campaign “You have a house, return the flat” in 1982. This article traces the development (and the ultimately lacklustre results) from its beginnings in Prizren, Kosovo, to its Yugoslav-wide adoption. Throughout the campaign trade unions and sympathisers were unable to systematically rein in the abuse of privilege on the part of elites and ordinary citizens alike and the campaign was frequently ridiculed as an empty party slogan. The anti-elite sentiment evident in discussions of housing abuse would however find expression just a few years later during the 1988-1989 Anti-bureaucratic revolution.

Keywords: imaš kuću – vrati stan, housing, Prizren, 1980s, Yugoslavia, social inequalities, social privileges

Introduction

In 1982, a year after demonstrations in the Socialist Autonomous Province of Kosovo were violently quashed by Yugoslav Federal forces, local authorities in Prizren, Kosovo’s second city, enacted a campaign called *Imaš kuću, vrati stan* (You have a house, return the flat, henceforth IKVS). The campaign probed individuals who were illegally using socially owned flats to return them so that individuals without sufficient housing could move into them. Even though Yugoslav law expressly forbid the possession of both a socially owned flat and a privately owned home, ineffective rules were regularly flouted. In the context of a severe long-term housing shortage in Yugoslavia, the campaign was adopted firstly in Kosovo, then in Serbia and throughout Yugoslavia in 1983. This text explores issues of social (in)equality, privilege, class, morality, and the privatisation of socially owned property in 1980s Yugoslavia through a focus on this campaign to free up socially owned housing. It draws on sources from Yugoslav print media¹ as well as oral

¹ Research was supported by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF): P 27008 Einzelprojekte. Most of the print media was consulted at the Dokumentacioni centar lista “Borba”, Trg Nikole Pašića 7, Bel-

history interviews conducted with Serbian workers about housing and labour in 1980s Yugoslavia.²

IKVS offers an insightful case study of failed attempts to rectify the widening gap between practice and theory in Yugoslav public life. Through the campaign one can observe and gain insight into larger, structural problems in 1980s Yugoslavia which include corruption of elites and ordinary citizens alike; the failure of the League of Communists and institutions of self-management to galvanise an increasingly cynical public; shrinking public spending under the conditions of economic crisis and corollary austerity measures (“stabilisation”); and problems relating to decentralisation (not only between the federal and republican level but also between municipalities and their republican centre). But despite the decentralised nature of 1980s Yugoslavia, the IKVS campaign also demonstrates how a local phenomenon originating in peripheral Kosovo could find expression across the Federal state. During the campaign trade unions and sympathisers of IKVS were unable to systematically rein in the abuse of privilege on the part of elites and ordinary citizens alike and the campaign was frequently ridiculed as an empty party slogan. The anti-elite sentiment evident in discussions of the abuse of housing would come to the fore just a few years later during the 1988-1989 Anti-bureaucratic revolution.

Housing and socio-economic precariousness in late Yugoslav socialism

Stanovanje u senci stabilizacije

Housing shortages were a constant feature of urban life in Yugoslavia. As in other socialist states,³ post-WWII measures limited the rights of property owners and saw the state take the initial lead in the financing, production and distribution.⁴ While in some socialist countries like Czechoslovakia, Poland and Romania the state constructed the majority of housing, in others a “substantial portion” was constructed

grade henceforth DCB). I am very grateful for comments on earlier versions of this paper by Radina Vučetić and Ivana Spasić.

² During 2014 I conducted 27 semi-structured interviews with (former) workers from a range of Belgrade based enterprises from late socialism including Minel, IMT, Kolubara, Srbijateks, Kvarc, Kluz, Geosonda, Janko Lisjak, IKL, and Simpo.

³ See for example Szelenyi, Ivan, *Urban Inequalities Under State Socialism*, New York 1983. (u daljem tekstu: Szelenyi, I., *Urban Inequalities...*)

⁴ Le Normand, Brigitte, “The House that Socialism Built: Reform, Consumption, and Inequality in Postwar Yugoslavia” in: *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe*, edited by Paulina Bren and Mary Neuberger, Oxford and New York 2012 p. 351–373, 353 (u daljem tekstu: Le Normand, B., “The House that Socialism Built...”); For insight into state attempts to provide housing in the decade after WWII see Dobrivojević, Ivana, *Selo i grad: Transformacija agrarnog društva Srbije 1945–1955*, Beograd 2013, str. 369–431.

privately including USSR, Bulgaria, East Germany and Hungary in addition to Yugoslavia.⁵ The consumerist shift in Yugoslavia was reflected in housing with self-managing firms, the private market and individual initiative through credit paying a greater role after 1959 both complimenting and contradicting socialist attempts to strive for equality.⁶

The cornerstone of Yugoslav housing policy was the construction of socially owned housing [*društveni stanovi*], apartment buildings which were built with the funds of enterprises and bank credits and distributed to employees in urban areas of Yugoslavia for use at subsidised prices. However the building of such apartments could not keep pace with rural to urban migration. In the early 1980s around a quarter of Yugoslavia's housing stock was socially owned (this figure was larger in administrative centres, rising to over 50 percent in Belgrade).⁷ The distribution of socially owned flats was systemically skewed against blue collar workers who were far less likely to live in this heavily subsidised type of housing than white collar workers.⁸ A study by Sekulić indicated that while 80 percent of those in positions of political leadership were housed in socially owned flats less than 22 percent of skilled and unskilled workers were living in them.⁹ Thus, many low paid workers needed to pay inflated market prices to rent privately or build homes independently, often assisted by credit from the workplace.¹⁰ Unskilled workers were "most likely to pay the highest rent for the least desirable housing".¹¹

As Le Normand argues, housing was used as a "litmus test by which the press and the public assessed the outcomes of consumer policy and economic reform" in regards to inequality as early as the 1950s.¹² Housing was a prominent and perennial topic of concern in Yugoslav media and public life. Lenard J. Cohen writes that "vocal criticism of class inequalities, elite privileges, and the foibles of state and party bureaucrats [was] a conventional feature of Yugoslav political discourse".¹³ Such criticism often related to abuses surrounding housing or other socially owned

⁵ Le Normande, Brigitte, *Designing Tito's Capital: Urban Planning, Modernisms and Socialism in Belgrade*, Pittsburg 2014, p. 169. (u daljem tekstu: Le Normande, *Designing Tito's Capital...*)

⁶ Le Normand, B., "The House that Socialism Built...", p. 356; Petrović, Mina, *Sociologija stanovanja – Stambena politika: izazovi i mogućnosti*, Beograd 2004, str. 81.

⁷ Vujović, Sreten, „Društvena slojevitost i stanovanje u Beogradu“, u: *Sociološki pregled XX* (3–4), 1986, str. 179–194, 184.

⁸ Vujović, Sreten, "Social inequality and Dwelling", u: *Sociologija*, special edition, 1986, str. 241–254.

⁹ Sekulić, Duško, "Putevi i stranputice stambene politike", u: *Sociologija*, 38(3), str. 347–371

¹⁰ Le Normande, *Designing Tito's Capital...*, p. 149.

¹¹ Simić, Andrei, *The Peasant Urbanites Peasant Urbanites: A Study of Rural-Urban Mobility in Serbia*, New York 1973, p. 95.

¹² Le Normand, B., "The House that Socialism Built...", p. 352.

¹³ Cohen, Lenard, J., *The Socialist Pyramid: Elites and Power in Yugoslavia*, Oakville, Ontario, p. 440. (u daljem tekstu: Cohen, L., J., *The Socialist Pyramid...*)

property. What differentiated critical discussions of class inequalities and elite corruption in the early 1980s from previous ones however, was the spectre of rapidly deteriorating living standards. The burden of austerity inspired reforms (“stabilisation”) was primarily placed on the shoulders of workers in the social sector and living standards in the early 1980s were pushed back to the levels of the 1960s.¹⁴ Parallel to the rapid drop in living standards, demographic trends for the first time indicated that poverty had become a predominantly urban phenomenon in Yugoslavia.¹⁵ According to a study by Branko Milanović the urban poor increased by some 800,000 individuals between 1978 and 1983 changing the geography of poverty in the country which hitherto had been considered a rural problem and legacy of the pre-communist regime.¹⁶ New social inequalities which had developed under socialism¹⁷ empirically contradicted narratives of modernisation and wellbeing through industrialisation and urbanisation.

Figures circulating in the Yugoslav media in the late 1970s and early 1980s claimed that up to half a million Yugoslavs were “homeless”. Homeless in Yugoslav socialist discourse did not necessarily mean without living on the street without shelter but referred to a phenomenon that Tsenkova terms “hidden homelessness” in socialist states;¹⁸ substandard living conditions which may have included living with relatives in cramped conditions or renting on the grey real estate market from exploitative landlords (Vujović writes that in Belgrade in the mid-1980s 20 percent of inhabitants lived as subtenants).¹⁹ Yet, despite the alleged numbers of homeless Yugoslavs, the 1981 census recorded roughly the same number of households as there were flats and houses in the country. Did this mean that the figures of those without homes were vastly overestimated? Zagreb weekly *Danas* argued that this imbalance reflected the existence of “privileged landlords and exploited tenants” – a significant number of individuals had acquired multiple properties while another section of Yugoslavs were not in possession of *any* housing.²⁰ The implication in media reports was that

¹⁴ Schierup, Carl-Ulrik, 1992. “Quasi-Proletarians and a Patriarchal Bureaucracy: Aspects of Yugoslavia’s Re-peripheralization” *Soviet Studies*, 44 (1), p. 86.

¹⁵ In 1973 around 30 per cent of poor Yugoslav households lived in urban areas. By 1983 this figure had risen to 60 per cent. (Milanović, Branko, *Ekonomska nejednakost u Jugoslaviji*, Beograd 1990, str. 314–315. (u daljem tekstu: Milanović, B., *Ekonomska nejednakost...*))

¹⁶ Milanović, B., *Ekonomska nejednakost...* The empirical data for Milanović’s study was based on surveys of household’s revenues and expenditures carried out by the Yugoslav Federal Statistics Office.

¹⁷ For a comparative analysis on this phenomenon see Szelenyi, I., *Urban Inequalities...*

¹⁸ Tsenkova, Sasha, *Housing Policy Reforms in Post Socialist Europe*, Heidelberg 2009, p. 29.

¹⁹ Vujović, Sreten, „Društvene nejednakost u stanovanju“, u: *Društvene nejednakosti – sociološko istraživanje u Beogradu*, Popović, M. V. et al. Beograd, 1987, str. 79–120, 91. (u daljem tekstu: Vujović, S., „Društvene nejednakost...“)

²⁰ Nikolić, Zorica, „Stanovi: Potraga za ljudima s više adresa“, *Danas*, br. 46, 04. januar 1983, str. 4–7. (u daljem tekstu: Nikolić, Z. „Stanovi: Potraga za ljudima...“)

individuals who gained multiple housing units had abused privileged positions at the expense of wider society. Not only had these offenders occupied scarce flats, they were renting them to homeless workers for profit, effectively privatising a socially owned good. Renting rooms or flats was not properly regulated in Yugoslavia often creating a situation of exploitation for (sub)tenants. For example Montenegro had roughly equal numbers of households and residential units at around 150,000. Yet at least 14,000 people, mostly workers awaiting housing, paid rents of between 20,000 and 30,000 dinars per month to landlords while the average income was 40,000.²¹ Conversely, the rent for socially owned flats was “absurdly small”, representing less than 5 per cent of an average working family’s income in 1980.²² The surplus income of many white collar workers as a result of subsidised socially owned housing was frequently used to build private family homes or holiday homes (*vikendice*)²³ or to engage in ever prevalent consumerism.²⁴

Dissatisfaction with this state of affairs amongst trade union leaders paved the way for the IKVS campaign. Bogoljub Nedeljković, President of the Council of Trade Unions of Yugoslavia (and former President of the SAP Kosovo Parliament) declared in late 1982

There have been enough deviant phenomena, assaults on social property, bribes, corruption. All of that is in opposition to socialist norms. We have to fight against it [...] Yugoslavs are lacking flats. Half a million, six hundred, seven hundred thousand, even after the most recent, most precise, census of property and inhabitants it is not precisely established how many families are without a secure roof over their heads. To the surprise of the ordinary people [*opštenarodno iznenađenje*] ... [there exists] indisputable proof that we have more homes than families!²⁵

Although Nedeljković and other observers may have failed to consider the underused or abandoned stock of housing in rural areas which migratory trends had left depopulated (thus accounting for the similar numbers of homes and households) the system of socially owned housing distribution was nevertheless deeply flawed and significant numbers of flats were misused.

²¹ Banović, P. „Prodaj kuću – zadrži stan“, *Borba*, 31. mart 1986 (DCB, 1986, Jugoslavija, Građevinarstvo, dodela stanova, akcija “Imaš kuću – vrati stan” – u daljem tekstu: DCB, 1986...)

²² *Ekonomska Politika*, 17 May 1982, pp. 20–22 cited in Lydall, Harold, *Yugoslav Socialism: Theory and Practice*. Oxford and New York, 1984, p. 231–2.

²³ On *vikendice* see Taylor, Karin, “My Own Vikendica: Holiday Cottages as Idyll and Investment”, u: *Yugoslavia’s Sunny Side: A History of Tourism in Socialism (1950s–1980s)* edited by Hannes Grandits and Karin Taylor, Budapest 2010, p. 171–210.

²⁴ Vučetić, Radina, *Koka-kola socijalizam*, Beograd 2012, str. 350–376; Patterson, Patrick Hyder, *Bought and sold: Living and losing the good life in Socialist Yugoslavia*, Ithaca and London 2001.

²⁵ Marinko, M., „Kad ne može zakon“, *Novosti*, 8, 13. novembar 1982, str. 7–8.

The development of a campaign in Prizren

Imaš kuću, vrati stan

In August 1982 *Politika* reported that the citizens of Prizren were embarking on a novel campaign to free up socially owned housing. 74 residents of Kosovo's second largest city who owned a family home while possessing a socially owned flat were being asked to return the flat by local authorities.²⁶ Although the misuse of socially owned flats was common knowledge for many years in the city and spoken about publicly, the responsible authorities had not yet taken concrete legal measures.²⁷ President of the Prizren municipal assembly Staniša Marković stated that these 74 citizens had built new family homes by making use of favourable credit, using their socially owned flat to rent privately or to give to other family members.²⁸ Owning a house while maintaining rights to a socially owned flat was illegal according to Article 14 of the law on the Housing Affairs made public in the Official Gazette of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo (No. 23, 1973).²⁹ This was communicated in letters sent to the 74 offenders by Marković and Secretary of the Municipal Secretariat of Urbanism, Communal and Residential Affairs, Agim Betiçi.³⁰

The 74 offenders were ordered to move out of their socially owned flats within 30 days or face eviction.³¹ The identity of the individuals on the list were not to be immediately revealed (Marković commented that it "would be a sensationalist move of value only to the petty bourgeoisie [*malograđani*])³² but unofficially it was known in Prizren who was on the list which according to *Ilustrovaná Politika* comprised of a local elite encompassing members of the municipal leadership (both current and former), ranks of the former provincial leadership, directors of firms and many doctors.³³ Some had flats from workplaces they had never even been employed in. Others received socially owned flats allegedly after already being in possession of

²⁶ Kostić, I., „Društveni stan nije Alajbegova slama“, *Politika*, 12. august 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982, Jugoslavija, Građevinarstvo, dodela stanova, akcija „Imaš kuću – vrati stan“ – u daljem tekstu: DCB, 1979–1982...). U daljem tekstu: Kostić, I., „Društveni stan nije...“

²⁷ Kostić, I., „Društveni stan nije...“

²⁸ Kostić, I., „Društveni stan nije...“. Every republic and autonomous province had a separate law regulating socially owned housing all of which outlawed the possession of a socially owned flat and a private home or the possession of multiple socially owned flats.

²⁹ Zec, Stevan, „Imaš kuću vrati stan“, *Ilustrovaná Politika*, 24. august 1982, str. 16–17. (u daljem tekstu: Zec, S., „Imaš kuću vrati stan“...)The possession of socially owned flat was forbidden across Yugoslavia, regulated at the level of republic or autonomous province.

³⁰ Zec, S., „Imaš kuću vrati stan“...

³¹ Marković, J., „Stopirane malverzacije sa stanovima“, *Borba*, 13. august 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

³² Zec, S., „Imaš kuću vrati stan“...

³³ Zec, S., „Imaš kuću vrati stan“...

“private villas.”³⁴ *Komunist* also suggested that those who have both a private house and occupancy rights to a flat were frequently those in high positions with “connections” [veze] and “protectors” and so broke “moral and legal norms”.³⁵

Marković pointed out that on the list of 74 offenders there were “Albanians, Serbs, Montenegrins, Muslims, Turks and even Roma”. He joked that the “national key of equality was at work even amongst the privileged” though he added on a serious note that “we are prepared to respond to any accusations that this action is a means to pressure evictions on a national basis”.³⁶ The Prizren campaign began barely a year after the violent suppression of the 1981 Kosovo protests which had been framed as “counter-revolutionary” and suppressed by Federal armed forces.³⁷ The demonstrations did however prompt some degree of reflexivity about the governance of Kosovo, including plans to increase the efficiency of economic aid and rectify poor labour productivity.³⁸ In this vein, Jordan Kostić, Secretary of the Municipal League of Communists, cited IKVS as a response to the events of March 1981 – a means to restore the “dignity” of the League of Communists in the Province. “The inadequacy of the Kosovo communists led to the well-known events of spring last year [the March 1981 riots]. Overall, the reputation of the League of Communists of Kosovo is shaken and the party must recover it through this campaign if it is to remain an avant-garde of the working class”.³⁹ *Ilustrovana Politika* reported that the campaign would “contribute more to the fight against irredentism than any other kind of measures ... It seems that the fight for the fastest resolution of socio-political questions has got the right recipe. And that is simple – consistent respect and application if the law.”⁴⁰

By 22 September 1982 the Conference of the Alliance of Trade Unions of Kosovo endorsed the campaign.⁴¹ Again, it was articulated as a means for the Party to regain its stature which had been damaged the previous year.⁴² IKVS was presented as part of a wider “war” against “negative phenomena [*negativne pojave*]” in Kosovo. Such negative phenomena (like the public’s debt to TV Priština of 220 million dinars since 1978) allegedly went “hand in hand with those who wish to

³⁴ Zec, S., „Imaš kuću vrati stan“...

³⁵ Bakić, Žarko, „I stan i kuća“, *Komunist*, 10. septembar 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

³⁶ Zec, S., „Imaš kuću vrati stan“...

³⁷ See Pavlović, Momčilo “Kosovo under Autonomy, 1974–1990”, in: *Confronting the Yugoslav Controversies: A Scholar’s initiative* edited by Charles Ingrao and Thomas A. Emmert, West Lafayette, Indiana, 2009, p. 48–81, p. 60–2.

³⁸ Cohen, L., J., *The Socialist Pyramid...*, p. 368.

³⁹ Zec, S., „Imaš kuću vrati stan“...

⁴⁰ Zec, S., „Imaš kuću vrati stan“...

⁴¹ Konferencija SS Kosova, *Borba*, 22. septembar 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

⁴² Kuburović, Mirjana, „Ko zaslužuje aplauz“, *Politika*, 23. januar 1983 (DCB, 1983...). u daljem tekstu: Kuburović, M., „Ko zaslužuje aplauz“...

compromise our self-management system”.⁴³ Thus, local power brokers attempted to cognitively link a range of social ills (the non-payment of bills, abuse of social property) to Kosovo Albanian political discontent. Beyond Kosovo IKVS was also presented as a means for the League of Communists to gain stature. *Danas* reported similar discussions emanating from the Central Committee of the Croatian League of Communists which told of the need to rectify problems and legal contradictions and uphold the norms of socialist morals. Warnings were expressed that the Croatian League of Communists needed to regain its reputation which was lost because of “passivity and opportunism”.⁴⁴ Indeed, across Yugoslavia grassroots party membership had fallen, most noticeably amongst workers and young people.⁴⁵ IKVS was presented as a way for the party and trade union to curry favour with the rank and file of Yugoslavia’s “working people”.

The campaign in Prizren immediately garnered media attention and municipal president Staniša Marković claimed to have received letters and phone calls of support from the whole of Yugoslavia. In an interview in March 2014 he reiterates the importance of journalists in spreading word of IKVS. “Journalists began writing about it in the papers and it spread throughout Yugoslavia”.⁴⁶ A letter from an *Ekspres Politika* reader in Belgrade expressed the potentially moral character of IKVS as a “stimulus to the communists, working people and citizens throughout Yugoslavia to show their personal and moral quality as members of the League of Communists or as honest citizens” and thus the Prizren campaign was posited as “an example which should not remain isolated”.⁴⁷ *Ilustrovana Politika* suggested that the campaign be extended to other towns in Yugoslavia because unlawful occupancy of socially owned flats was a problem in every city in the whole country.⁴⁸ IKVS was subsequently endorsed at the Serbian Conference of the Alliance of Trade Unions and entered the resolution of the 9th Congress of Trade Unions of Yugoslavia in late 1982⁴⁹ where it was a favourite theme [*šlager tema*] of the event.⁵⁰ In addition to trade union and political support, former Prizren municipal president Markovic considers that it was “supported with open arms by ordinary people [*narod*]”.⁵¹ However he recalls that the initial development of the campaign IKVS was largely accidental only target-

⁴³ J. M. „Dug televiziji 220 miliona dinara“, *Borba*, 24. septembar 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

⁴⁴ Nikolić, Z. „Stanovi: Potraga za ljudima...“

⁴⁵ Bolčić, Silvano, „Savez komunista u ostvarivanju interesa radničke klase“ u: *Radnička klasa i SKJ danas* Beograd, 1986, str. 39–59, 46.

⁴⁶ Interview with Staniša Marković, Belgrade, March 2014.

⁴⁷ Trmčić, Dragutin, „Primer koji ne bi smeo da ostane usamljen“, *Ekspres Politika*, 16. septembar 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

⁴⁸ Zec, S., „Imaš kuću vrati stan“...

⁴⁹ Kuburović, M., „Ko zaslužuje aplauz“...

⁵⁰ Čelan, Joško, „Akcija ‘vrati stan’“, *Nedeljna Dalmacija*, 21. novembar 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

⁵¹ Interview with Staniša Marković, Belgrade, March 2014.

ing the local community. Marković recalls that he and colleagues had engaged in numerous other campaigns in Prizren in that period including the reforestation of the surrounding hills and reconstruction of the urban river banks of the Bistrica. “It was dynamic then in Prizren, there were many new factories... over 20,000 people were employed ... people worked, the town was built up”.⁵² In the 1970s and 1980s a new generation of educated cadres and workers alike came from the surrounding hinterland to Prizren. They could not rely on relatives for help in solving their accommodation needs as those from established Prizren families may have.⁵³ As a result IKVS was enacted on an ad-hoc, local basis.

Yet despite the fanfare and threats of eviction⁵⁴ and the “political, moral and material consequences” of ignoring the order to vacate socially owned flats⁵⁵ only a single flat was returned by the time the 30 day deadline expired in Prizren.⁵⁶ President of the municipal commission for IKVS Agim Bitići explained that the campaign did not achieve the expected results and found it particularly worrying that of the more than 90 people who were officially notified that they would have to give up a flat only 36 came to the municipal assembly to explain why they were not adhering to the directive while more than 60 simply ignored the request.⁵⁷ Marković and Bitići claimed that some individuals had not yet finished their houses and thus a special commission to review these cases must be formed.⁵⁸ Nearly all of the offenders claimed that they could not vacate their flats as their houses were still not finished, evidently hoping the dust would settle on the campaign and they could remain in possession of both their house and flat.⁵⁹ Many of the individuals listed succeeded in doing just this. By 1986 Kosovo Serb daily *Jedinstvo* reported that only 44 flats in Prizren had been returned.⁶⁰ Marković recalls that after his mandate as municipal president has concluded he moved to Pristina to work at the SAP Kosovo Ministry of Education and his successor “washed his hands” of the campaign.⁶¹

⁵² Interview with Staniša Marković, Belgrade, March 2014. Indeed 19,336 workers were employed in the social sector in Prizren (out of some 60,000 inhabitants) according to the 1981 census. The largest sectors were industry and mining (8,005 workers) and construction (2,494 workers) *Statistički godišnjak Jugoslavije 1990*, Beograd 1990, str. 710.

⁵³ Interview with Bojana, a teacher who moved to work in Prizren in the 1970s from an outlying village, Belgrade, March 2014

⁵⁴ Marković, J., „Stopirane malverzacije sa stanovima“, *Borba*, 13. august 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

⁵⁵ Kostić, I., „Društveni stan nije...”

⁵⁶ Marković, J., „Vraćen samo jedan stan“, *Borba*, 16. septembar 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

⁵⁷ Ibid.; Kostić, I., „Mnogo zaboravnih“, *Politika*, 19. septembar 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

⁵⁸ Negojević, P. i Todorović, M., „Ključeve na videlo!“, *Ekspres Politika*, 16. septembar 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

⁵⁹ Zec, Stevan, „Sto prozvaao a jedan dao“, *Ilustrovana Politika*, 21. septembar 1982, str. 20–21.

⁶⁰ Staletović, Lj., „Samo korak od početka“, *Jedinstvo*, 07. april 1986 (DCB, 1986...).

⁶¹ Interview with Staniša Marković, March 2014.

Towards a Yugoslav-wide campaign

Neka sindikat povede kolo!

While in Kosovo the meaning of IKVS was expressly connected to attempts to restore the public image of the party after the violence of March 1981, in Yugoslavia more widely it found expression in terms of socialist morality and the necessity to limit privilege and the privatisation of socially owned property which was all the more problematic in the context of economic crisis. The President of the Council of Trade Unions Bogoljub Nedeljković announced in his address to his trade union comrades in the 1982 federal congress that “We are faced with the phenomenon and practice that property and wealth is acquired contrary to work ... to the detriment of socially owned property through bribes corruption and similar ways.”⁶² He coupled this with the “programme of stabilisation” the necessity to repay foreign debts which he acknowledged would further damage the standard of living of many workers.⁶³ Thus the increasingly precarious position of Yugoslav workers in the 1980s was cited as an impetus to return socially owned flats and adhere to socialist morals.

The trade union publication *Rad* reported on the campaign in moralistic terms and featured a number of model socialist protagonists from Bosnia Herzegovina clamouring loudly in support of the transfer of socially owned property from corrupt economic and political leaders to deserving workers.

“Individuals, mainly people in leadership positions [*rukovodeći ljudi*] have skimmed off the cream and built themselves grand quarters but held onto socially owned flats. That is immoral and unsocialist and has to be stopped in its tracks. The campaign should be Yugoslav-wide because in every town there are people who possess a home and a socially owned flat.” *Mustafa Heder, worker in “Jedinstvo” Bosanski Novi.*⁶⁴

“The trade union should lead the way [*povede kolo*]” – “I whole heartedly support the action of Prizren and other places because in that way it alleviates the difficulties of many workers and citizens who are living as renters ...” *Husein Šarčević, director of the centre for culture in Sanski Most*⁶⁵

“They abused the privilege” – “For years I longed for a new roof over my head and not long ago I got it finally. Some individuals have however, almost overnight, acquired a comfortable flat and a lovely house. How? They abused the privilege of leadership positions and favourable credits and are now rubbing their hands in

⁶² *IX Kongres saveza sindikata Jugoslavije* Beograd 1982, str. 52. (u daljem tekstu: *IX Kongres saveza...*)

⁶³ *IX Kongres saveza...*

⁶⁴ Jelačić, Svetlana, „Šire se akcija „Imaš kuću, vrati stan“, *Rad*, br. 44, 05. novembar 1982, str. 8–9. (u daljem tekstu: Jelačić, S., „Šire se akcija...”)

⁶⁵ Jelačić, S., „Šire se akcija...”

satisfaction. All those who have a flat in social ownership and a private home, and those are not in a small number in Prijedor, should return the flat and with that ease the housing problem in the city. *Branko Malnović, highly qualified worker of the Ljubija mine.*⁶⁶

Those that supported the action tended to legitimise it in moral and symbolic rather than legal or economic terms. It was clear for the “model” workers cited in *Rad* that Yugoslav society was being dogged by greed and corruption from members of the ruling elites (managers, directors and those in political positions). IKVS was not necessarily expected to resolve the housing crises and provide homes for all homeless Yugoslavs but it was to symbolically help mitigate a moral imbalance. Some reports suggested that if abuses were less visible to those who were waiting to resolve their housing status they would be patient and less inclined to make a fuss.⁶⁷ A delegate from Pula at the 9th Congress of the Federation of Yugoslav Trade Unions implored “Have we imagined how it is for our self-management homeless person [*samoupravljajč-beskućnik*] who sees beautiful villas and comfortable homes around them?”⁶⁸ *Ekspres Politika* proclaimed that IKVS was relying on the logic of “a direct class demand for equality [...] against selfishness and petty bourgeois greed”.⁶⁹

The first returnees of socially owned flats were lauded as heroes. Šaban Beriša, the lawyer who returned the first flat in Prizren became “a figure of federal rank and a media sensation”.⁷⁰ Ratislav Filipović, a *gastarbajter* who returned the key of his socially owned flat to his former employers in Požarevac upon building a house from the fruits of 12 years of work in Rosenheim, Germany, was similarly feted.⁷¹ However others were cynical of the campaign’s prospects from the beginning. A *Novosti 8* journalist wryly noted that “the gesture [of Beriša] was a symbol of our moral situation and mentality – it is enough to adhere to the law to get national fame!”⁷² Stojan Stojčeski, a member of the Presidency of the Council of Yugoslav Trade Unions, declared that returning flat is *not* a high moral deed because those who have houses are giving something up that they had no right to.⁷³ (He did however support the campaign “unreservedly” in his introductory address at the IX Congress of Yugoslav

⁶⁶ Jelačić, S., „Šire se akcija...”

⁶⁷ Radivođa, Branislav, „Posle kongresnih aplauza“, *Komunist*, 30. septembar 1983 (u daljem tekstu: Radivođa, B., „Posle kongresnih...”) (DCB, 1983...).

⁶⁸ Nikolić, Z., „Stanovi: Potraga za ljudima...”

⁶⁹ Stefanović, Dragutin, „Zašto Beograd ćuti?“, *Ekspres Politika*, 10. januar 1983 (DCB, 1983...).

⁷⁰ M.G., „Dve laste ne čine akciju“, *Novosti 8*, 29. septembar 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...) u daljem tekstu: M.G., „Dve laste ne čine...”

⁷¹ Z. S., „Ratislav Filipović vratio stan“, *Politika*, 15. novembar 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

⁷² M.G., „Dve laste ne čine...”

⁷³ „Dužnici nisu – junaci“, *Večernje Novosti*, 13. decembar 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

Trade Unions and encouraged its adoption by all associations of associated labour and SIZ groups).⁷⁴

Analytical critics of IKVS pointed out that if the law was not upheld (and laws in all republics and autonomous provinces outlawed the possession of a social flat and additional property prior to IKVS) then a largely voluntary and uncoordinated campaign was unlikely to succeed in rectifying matters. If the law was simply adhered to, no such kind of action would be necessary.⁷⁵ This was the view of President of a socio-political council in the city parliament of Novi Sad. When asked whether IKVS would be enacted in Vojvodina's capital he responded that "The law on housing affairs clearly reads: one cannot at the same time possess their own home and use a social flat. So there is not any need to begin some new campaign, to finance its organisation, instead we shall demand consistent implementation of the existing law".⁷⁶ A member of Committee for Communal and Residential Affairs of New Belgrade Miša Milošević considered that people were expecting too much from IKVS and that a greater focus should have been made on enforcing the existing law.⁷⁷

Even before IKVS even begun in earnest in Serbia concerns were already being raised in the Presidency of the Alliance of Trade Unions of Serbia.⁷⁸ A *Večernje novosti* article was doubtful of the action's prospects.

For such complicated work to be completed it is not enough to have newspaper headlines and trade union delegate criticism of those who have a flat and house (or even a few flats!) while homeless workers go to their pensions without a roof over their heads. Similarly the action will not succeed if the task is written in resolutions and actions but without knowing what has to be done and by whom.⁷⁹

In late 1982 when *Večerne novosti* journalists contacted the President and Secretary of the Federation of Trade Unions of Serbia to enquire about how IKVS would be implemented and by whom, they did not receive as much as a partial response and thus they pondered whether the campaign might turn into a "demagogic slogan" with little results.⁸⁰ The bombastically announced campaign faltered from the onset, necessitating consultations to give a new impulse to this "demand of the working class".⁸¹ By the end of January 1983 all municipal councils of the Alliance of Trade

⁷⁴ *IX Kongres saveza...*, str. 358.

⁷⁵ Bilbija, Đuro, „Ni makac izvan zakona“, *Večernje novosti*, 23. decembar 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

⁷⁶ Stanojević, Slobodan, „Suvišna akcija“, *Borba*, 23. mart 1983 (DCB, 1983...).

⁷⁷ B.H. „Imaš kuću, vrati stan“, *Politika*, 25. decembar 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

⁷⁸ DCB, 1983– Jugoslavija, Građevinarstvo, stambena problematika, dodela stana, akcija "Imas kucu – vrati stan", „*Predsedništvo saveza veća sindikata Srbije* "B", 21. januar 1983.

⁷⁹ Čorović, B., „Imaš zakon – vrati stan“, *Večernje novosti*, 10. novembar 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ DCB, 1983 – Jugoslavija, građevinarstvo, stambena problematika, dodela stana, akcija "Imas kucu – vrati stan", „*Predsedništvo saveza veća sindikata Srbije* "B", 21. januar.1983.

Unions of Serbia were to provide precise information about the results of the action IKVS as the results to date were euphemistically described as “mixed”.⁸² The results of the campaign were poor in most localities. Some reports describe the obstruction of local party officials while others blame vested interests of certain enterprises.⁸³ It was reported in 1983 that in Prizren IKVS ran into difficulty because of politically prominent individuals who possessed multiple flats. They goaded the Parliament of SAP Kosovo in Priština to request in writing that Prizren municipality temporarily halt the campaign so they would not have to immediately return flats.⁸⁴

According to the 1981 census in Serbia at least 10,870 households had a second home in addition to the one they lived in, not including holiday homes (*vikendice*).⁸⁵ Yet, by the summer of 1983 only 50 flats were returned in rump Serbia, 150 were returned in Kosovo and a mere 6 in Vojvodina.⁸⁶ Most flats were freed up in smaller, peripheral towns⁸⁷ (like the mining town of Bor⁸⁸ in Eastern Serbia) where housing shortages were not such a grave issue. In Belgrade results were negligible. Only five flats had been returned by the end of September 1983.⁸⁹ Yet in Belgrade the housing shortage was the most acute in Yugoslavia with figures indicating that the capital consistently lacked 50,000 flats.⁹⁰ The poor results of IKVS in Belgrade were attributed to “general passivity in working organisations, *mesne zajednice* and municipalities”.⁹¹ It was clear that the trade union which instigated the campaign did not have the formal or legal competencies for carrying out IKVS nor the support from organs that did.⁹² A report in *Komunist* on trade union attempts to bring order to socially owned flats in the Belgrade working class suburb of Rakovica in the context of IKVS concluded that “in order to complete the work successfully many other organs would need to help, including those who are actually paid to carry out this kind of work”.⁹³ The Council

⁸² Andrić, S., „Organizovano u akciju „Imaš kuću – vrati stan“, *Politika*, 21. januar 1983 (DCB, 1983, Jugoslavija, Građevinarstvo, stambena problematika, dodela stanova, akcija „Imaš kuću – vrati stan” – u daljem tekstu: DCB, 1983...).

⁸³ For example in the Kosovo city of Uroševac the largest firms in the city were silent about the action (see Jelačić, Svetlana “Imaš kuću – vrati stan”, *Rad*, br. 42, 21. oktobar 1983, str. 3–5 (u daljem tekstu: Jelačić, S. “Imaš kuću – vrati stan”...)) (DCB, 1983...). In Bor, the Serbian city where the campaign was most successful only a couple of enterprises actually undertook the campaign, more than 30 had not done so (see S. I. „Bor rekorder“, *Ekspres Politika*, 11. mart 1984. (DCB, 1983...).

⁸⁴ Jelačić, S. “Imaš kuću – vrati stan”...

⁸⁵ Kuburović, M., „Ko zaslužuje aplauz“...

⁸⁶ Haderdžonaj, S. et al „Akcija veliki – rezultati mali“, *Borba*, 23. jul 1983 (u daljem tekstu: Haderdžonaj, S. et al „Akcija veliki...”) (DCB, 1983...).

⁸⁷ Jelačić, S. “Imaš kuću – vrati stan”...

⁸⁸ S. Živković, „Vraćeno 108 ključeva“, *Ekspres Politika*, 01. april 1985 (DCB, 1983...).

⁸⁹ Radivođa, B., „Posle kongresnih...”, *Komunist*, 30. septembar 1983 (DCB, 1983...).

⁹⁰ Vujović, S., „Društvene nejednakost...“, str. 87.

⁹¹ Tanjug, „Mršavi rezultati“, *Borba*, 27 maj 1983 (DCB, 1983...).

⁹² Haderdžonaj, S. et al „Akcija veliki...”

⁹³ Radivođa, B., „Posle kongresnih...”

of the Alliance of Trade Unions of Montenegro declared that it “could not go from house to house, from street to street, pointing fingers at those who have two flats.”⁹⁴ The Council admitted there was a role for the trade union “but also for the working organisations, organs of self-management and for organs of administration, courts and prosecutors.”⁹⁵ In some places the League of Communists participated in IKVS but not sufficiently so in the view of supporters of the campaign.⁹⁶ At the level of republics and provinces there was no comprehensive analysis of how the campaign was unfolding because it was being waged haphazardly at the local municipal level with no republican or federal oversight beyond the moral support of the trade unions, some media reports, and some individual branches of the League of Communists.⁹⁷

The lack of central registers at all institutional levels (republics, provinces, municipalities, cities, self-managing firms) was a systematic problem in Yugoslav housing policy. It facilitated the abuse of socially owned property as there was no systematic way to definitively ascertain who flats were allocated to, when, and under what circumstances. No legal organ in the state followed the allocation of socially owned flats. Post-1974 self-managing interest groups for housing (*SIZ stanovanja*) were only competent to charge rent, anything else “did not concern them”.⁹⁸ Echoing a leitmotif of Yugoslav journalistic coverage of corruption *Danas* writes “we are a country with many laws and regulations but an incomprehensible gap between what is written and what is done”.⁹⁹ For example in Zagreb, like most other larger cities of Yugoslavia, there was no record of the residential capacity of the city, no inventory of holders of tenancy rights or home owners either for the city or at the level of individual municipalities.¹⁰⁰ When *Vjesnik* probed Zagreb housing cooperatives about the misuse of flats they found out very little as there was no documents kept about this, no inventories or lists of occupiers.¹⁰¹

In cases where municipalities attempted to impose some order and compile lists of residents of socially owned housing in their localities, a chaotic distribution of flats was revealed. Municipal authorities in Rakovica established that tenants lived in 113 large socially owned flats without any tenancy rights, some for over six years.¹⁰² In the largest Sarajevo municipality of Novi Grad after two months of the IKVS campaign the Municipal Commission for Residential and Communal Affairs announced that

⁹⁴ Stamatović, J. „Prvi stidljivi koraci“, *Pobjeda*, 24. januar 1983. (DCB, 1983...).

⁹⁵ Stamatović, J. „Prvi stidljivi koraci“, *Pobjeda*, 24. januar 1983.

⁹⁶ Haderžonaj, S. et al „Akcija veliki...”

⁹⁷ Haderžonaj, S. et al „Akcija veliki...”

⁹⁸ Marković, M., „Razvod od – morala“, *Večernje novosti*, 20. august 1983 (DCB, 1983...).

⁹⁹ Nikolić, Z. „Stanovi: Potraga za ljudima...”

¹⁰⁰ Nikolić, Z. „Stanovi: Potraga za ljudima...”

¹⁰¹ Martiš, Nada, „Korak dalje od snebivanje“, *Vjesnik*, 02. decembar 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

¹⁰² Krstajić, S., „Stanovi bez vlasnika“, *Večernje novosti*, 24. maj 1983 (DCB, 1983...).

one in ten holders of tenancy rights to a social flat also have an additional private house or flat, sometimes two or three.¹⁰³

However in one republic of Yugoslavia the IKVS campaign was not enacted. Slovenian authorities claimed that there were not many cases whereby individuals possessed both socially owned and private property.¹⁰⁴ According to Angela Murko, of the Republican Council for the Alliance of Trade Unions of Slovenia, the law on housing was applied properly and consistently through court processes.¹⁰⁵ Thus in the context of post-1974 decentralised Yugoslavia, Slovenia stood out as the only Yugoslav republic or province to properly apply the relevant laws on the possession of socially owned property thus rendering the campaign IKVS unnecessary.

Avoidance of the campaign

Imaš kuću – zadrži stan!

Yugoslav citizens who possessed a socially owned flat and a private house employed an array of strategies to retain their properties. Simply returning the socially owned flat as the campaign demanded was evidently not a popular choice; in the initial four years of the campaign an estimated 2,200 flats were returned throughout the country.¹⁰⁶ Despite the initial fanfare generated by zealous individuals in the trade unions, party circles and certain media, the campaign to enforce existing laws was largely a failure. While it was clear that across the country in all republics and autonomous provinces it was not allowed to possess a house and flat, most people were able to navigate the laws to their advantage in the absence of a “single precise and legally enforceable social contract for the entire country ... which would regulate the criteria for returning socially owned flats”.¹⁰⁷

Although the number of socially owned flats returned was modest, the prospect of IKVS did nonetheless prompt individuals to regulate their property status in various ways to avoid the possibility that they would have to part with socially owned property. Such actions were not technically illegal and oral history interviews indicate that they were very pervasive in the 1980s. One option was to sell a privately owned house before the campaign began in earnest in order to maintain tenancy rights to a social flat. Reports describe a glut of house sales in Banja Luka and Niš occurring in early 1983 as individuals sought to unload their additional housing on the market before facing the brunt of IKVS. In Banja Luka the number of property sales advertisements

¹⁰³ Kuburović, M., „Ko zaslužuje aplauz“...

¹⁰⁴ Haderdžonaj, S. et al „Akcija veliki...”

¹⁰⁵ Jelačić, S. “Imaš kuću – vrati stan”...

¹⁰⁶ *X Kongres saveza sindikata Jugoslavije*, Beograd 1986, str. 398. (u daljem tekstu: *X Kongres saveza...*)

¹⁰⁷ Jelačić, S. “Imaš kuću – vrati stan”...

was reported to have increased tenfold in comparison to the same month the previous year.¹⁰⁸ Judging from classified advertisements, municipal figures, tax records and reports from trade unions, in Belgrade there was a growing traffic of private home sales to mark the beginning of IKVS in early 1983.¹⁰⁹ The local newspaper in Niš *Narodne novine* declared that IKVS had given birth to another campaign called *Imaš stan, prodaj ili pokloni kuću* (“you have a flat, sell or give your home away as a present [to family]”) as citizens attempted to collectively sell, or pass on property to their children.¹¹⁰ For individuals determined to keep both properties in their family’s possession they could attempt to have an adult child or relative “inherit” the property or tenancy rights or initiate “divorce”.

Fictitious divorce (*lažni/fiktivni razvod*) was instrumentalised as means to keep multiple residences within the same family. The divorce would be legally sound but the couple in question would continue to live together at address while formally registering themselves at the two separate addresses. The additional property could be used to rent to subtenants and/or for children and other family members. Reports of this phenomenon were very common and not particularly controversial.¹¹¹ For example in 1983 *Danas* reports “Since 1978 Dragan Kocović lets a studio flat on *Prvomajska* street, Sarajevo. To be compliant with the law he declares his marriage with Janja Vucić as invalid but it does not bother the ‘spouses’ to live together in Rade Janković Street, no. 67”.¹¹² A member of the Committee for Communal and Residential Affairs of Novi Beograd reported that in cases where courts attempt to remove families from additional flats a divorce often follows so that the initial court ruling can be overturned as the couple are no longer together and each spouse is entitled to keep one socially owned flat.¹¹³ The supreme court of Macedonia observed that many hundreds of people in Skopje alone reregistered property in the name of adult children or obtained divorces in the lead up to IKVS.¹¹⁴ Oral history narrators in Belgrade in 2014 confirmed accounts of divorce as a common means to avoid returning social property. One female narrator recalled with a smile, the ironic case of a woman she had known who was having an affair with a married man for many years. When the man’s wife died the pair was finally able to get married. However, in

¹⁰⁸ Coco, K. „Kuće na ’raspradaji’“, *Ekspres Politika*, 18. januar 1983; „Imaš kuću – pokloni stan“(bez autora), *Borba*, 07. februar 1983 (DCB, 1983...).

¹⁰⁹ Krstajić, S. „Imaju stanovi, prodaju kući“, *Večernje novosti*, 02. februar 1983 (DCB, 1983...).

¹¹⁰ *Borba*, „Imaš kuću – pokloni stan“

¹¹¹ Kuburović, M., „Ko zaslužuje aplauz“...

¹¹² Nikolić, Z. „Stanovi: Potraga za ljudima...“

¹¹³ B.H. „Imaš kuću, vrati stan“, *Politika*, 25. decembar 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

¹¹⁴ Marković, M., „Razvod od – morala“

order to keep their respective properties, they embarked upon a (legal but fictitious) divorce less than a year into the marriage.¹¹⁵

No clear legal provisions dealt with pensioners who moved from larger cities where they occupied socially owned flats, to their home villages or retirement centres. A pensioner could let their flat in the city and live comfortably from the proceeds in their home villages or spa resorts like Arandelovac.¹¹⁶ *Danas* reported that in Sarajevo “For effortless work Ismet Tursumović receives 10,000 dinars in rent monthly by renting out his 3 bedroom flat on *Tetovska* 6. The owner of the flat is the JNA while Tursumović lives the ‘life of Reilly’ in his private house in Tuzla”.¹¹⁷ *Vjesnik* claimed that in Zagreb when pensioners move from socially owned flats “in 98% of cases”, instead of returning the social flat as per law sudden ‘inheritors’ appear who attempt to gain access to the flat via the courts. While the slow process begins in the courts the illegal residents move in and prepare the terrain by collecting signatures and witnesses in their favour.¹¹⁸ Agreements between occupants in a legal limbo and the resident committee of a building (*kućni savet*) were instrumental in legalising one’s status in a building.¹¹⁹

Given the chaotic and decentralised nature of housing policy in Yugoslavia, swapping property could be a useful means to retain possession of multiple private and socially owned property. The exchange of socially owned flats was generally allowed in Yugoslavia to enable a certain degree of residential flexibility targeting skilled workers and those whose profession necessitated mobility (for example JNA members or public servants). *Danas* reported a case where inhabitants of Sarajevo and Split who both owned a house and held tenancy rights to socially owned flat simply swapped the flats to evade laws which applied only at the particular republic but were not applied at federal level.¹²⁰ Those who owned property in their place of birth and held tenancy rights to social housing in other republican centres were mostly unaffected by IKVS. Oral history narrators in Belgrade in 2014 tended to consider that housing was primarily a concern of municipal authorities and so when property was owned in more distant municipalities the local authorities did not (or could not) interfere.

¹¹⁵ Interview with Marija, Belgrade, February 2014.

¹¹⁶ Jelačić, S. “Imaš kuću – vrati stan”...; Jelačić, S., „Šire se akcija...”

¹¹⁷ Nikolić, Z. „Stanovi: Potraga za ljudima...”

¹¹⁸ Martiš, Nada, „Korak dalje od snebivanje“, *Vjesnik*, 02. decembar 1982 (DCB, 1979–1982...).

¹¹⁹ Interview with Liljana, Belgrade, February 2014.

¹²⁰ Nikolić, Z. „Stanovi: Potraga za ljudima...”

IKVS as a site of ironic critique

Snadi se, druže!

While the Yugoslav press tended to cover the campaign seriously (either with strong ideological underpinnings like *Rad* or *Komunist* or more critically and analytically like *Politika*, *Danas* or *Novosti* 8) the campaign also formed an informal site of ironic critique exemplified by a skit by Sarajevo based *Top lista nadrealista* in 1984 which overtly mocked the campaign by presenting a spoof titled *Imaš kuću, imaš stan, imaš vikendicu, imaš šator – vrati šator!* (You have a house, you have a flat, you have a summer house, you have a tent – return the tent!).¹²¹ The implication was that corrupt functionaries who obtained numerous privileges would publicly return the most meagre (the tent) couched in socialist rhetoric. This was represented in the sketch by the character “Adem Statut”, a feckless politician who possessed multiple properties (a house, flat, summerhouse and tent) and proudly announced in laborious socialist rhetoric how he had returned the tent to society as part of the “spontaneous and deliberate campaign”.

Despite the limited success of IKVS in actually freeing up apartments, the slogan is nevertheless well remembered and sporadically emerges in post-Yugoslav public life (in contexts where individuals are reported to have usurped property or alternatively in poking fun at the former socialist state). An entry on the campaign in the nostalgically satirical *Leksikon YU mitologije* writes that “informed sources maintain that in the entire campaign a total of four flats were returned!”¹²² A retrospective piece on the campaign in a local newspaper from Karlovac correctly observed that a more accurate slogan than IKVS would have been “Snadi se, druže!” [Make do, comrade!].¹²³

Oral history narrators in 2014 tended to remember the campaign as somewhat silly, noting that the few who returned flats were “naïve”, “fearful” or “true communists” but most recalled that nearly “everyone” or “99 percent” held onto the flats. An unskilled worker in the Belgrade pharmaceutical firm “Galenika” recalled that those who returned flats during IKVS were considered “crazy” by others.¹²⁴ More common than memories of individuals who had actually returned flats during the campaign were stories of those who had abused their position to gain flats contrary to the rules, a phenomenon that nearly all narrators attested to in their workplaces.

¹²¹ Top lista nadrealista. Season 1, Episode 3, 1984. Online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Z4rXAOGVCI> [Accessed 19 September 2014]

¹²² “Imaš kuću, vrati stan”, *Leksikon Yu mitologije*, Beograd i Zagreb 2005, str. 164.

¹²³ Ivka, Tihomir, *KA Portal* “Karetrovizor: “Snadi se, druže” je ipak bila jača maksima od “imaš kuću, vrati stan”” Online: <http://kaportal.hr/karetrovizor/snadji-se-druze> [Accessed 12 October 2014]

¹²⁴ Interview with Slobodanka, Belgrade, March 2014

Conclusion

Narod to vidi, oseća i ne može da shvati

IKVS petered out during the late 1980s, becoming redundant in a context where the privatisation of socially owned housing stock was imminent¹²⁵ and trade union organisations stopped mentioning the campaign. The 1986 Federal Trade Union Congress emphasised the need for individuals to invest their own earnings to solve their housing status through individual building and housing cooperatives as a means of adhering to the programme of economic stabilisation.¹²⁶ Reports from the Congress estimated the return of 2,200 socially owned flats throughout Yugoslavia noting that the lack of support from other institutions and organisations.¹²⁷ *Ekspres Politika* referred to the campaign in more blunt terms describing it as “unsuccessful and exhausted”.¹²⁸ After 1986 IKVS slowed even further, only active in limited, local contexts¹²⁹ and when it arose in media it was described as a “now forgotten campaign”.¹³⁰

IKVS as an ad-hoc campaign without a firm legal basis was an implicit admission on the part of authorities that the law was not effective with regard to housing in social ownership and that particular institutions (municipal and self-management) were not functioning as they should. The reach of the state in the housing sector was weak and the designated self-management institutions were ineffective and plagued by vested interests of local political and economic elites who were profiting from the status quo. With the failure of legal means to enforce rules on the fair and rational use of socially owned housing, IKVS was an attempt to rely on moral pressure bound up in socialist norms as understood by the trade union networks and other organs that involved themselves in the campaign. Individuals targeted however, mostly rejected or subverted this moral pressure, revealing ambiguous attitudes towards the state and local authorities. Socialist morality was varied in its conception. IKVS demonstrates such a diversity amongst the trade union and party organisations, municipalities, firms and ordinary people. For some it meant a blind commitment to hitherto rhetoric coupled with the new bombastic slogan IKVS. For others it meant the furthering of market mechanisms (such as introducing economic rents for socially owned flats) as

¹²⁵ Milošević, Z., „Otkup društvenih stanova, kvadratura između straha i pohlepe“, *Borba*, 12. oktobar 1987 (DCB, 1987, Jugoslavija, Građevinarstvo, dodela stanova, akcija “Imaš kuću, vrati stan” – u daljem tekstu: DCB, 1987...). See also Petrović, M. *Sociologija stanovanje*

¹²⁶ *X Kongres saveza...*, str. 397–389.

¹²⁷ *X Kongres saveza...*, str. 397–389.

¹²⁸ Ivanović, Branimir, “U korist siromašnih”, *Ekspres Politika*, 1. jul 1987 (DCB, 1987...).

¹²⁹ For example a renewed local campaign in Osijek occurred in 1987. Sajler, Mirko, “Nova inventura stambenog fonda”, *Vjesnik*, 27. oktobar 1987 (DCB, 1987...).

¹³⁰ J.M. “Kuća za vlasnika – stan za podstanara”, *Borba*, 29. april 1987 (DCB, 1987...).

well the adherence to existing law with the expressed goal of reducing the inequalities that had resulted from the system of limited subsidised housing.

The contours of IKVS highlights that even in a state as decentralised as federal Yugoslavia in a context where republican interests increasingly trumped those of the centre, a local ad-hoc campaign from the Yugoslav periphery was able to find expression throughout the country (with the notable exception of Slovenia). This demonstrates that despite differing regional and socio-economic contexts, many issues of concern (in this case housing and its abuse by elites) remained common to the state as a whole.

Shades of anti-elite populism began to emerge in the mid-1980s amongst Yugoslavs who as Cohen writes “in good economic times cynically tolerated elite privileges ... were unwilling to accept such practices when their own standard of living was clearly at stake”.¹³¹ Housing abuses represented one such point of reference. In this sense IKVS might be interpreted as an attempt of trade union and party organisations to harness such populism that might be turned against its members. The failure of the campaign to deliver results however, saw it backfire, perhaps most sharply in Kosovo where it began. A harbinger to the populist delegitimation of much of the Yugoslav political class during the late 1980s Anti-bureaucratic Revolution in Serbia and Montenegro¹³² appeared in the Kosovo daily *Jedinstvo* in late 1985. In addressing the poor results of IKVS in Kosovo the disappointed author deplored politicians and trade union officials who behaved as if they were “stronger than the law”, lectured the working class on stabilisation; instead of returning flats they “continued to wave red party membership books ... coming to ‘understandings’ with municipal committees, courts and working collectives”.¹³³ Referring to the refusal to publish the list of housing offenders in Prizren and other Kosovo towns during IKVS, the article concludes “why not admit that by hiding lists of occupiers of houses and socially owned flats from the eyes of the public we are hiding their *lack* of power [*nemoć*]. The people [*narod*] sees it, feels it, and cannot understand it”¹³⁴

¹³¹ Cohen, L., J., *The Socialist Pyramid...*, p. 441

¹³² See Vladislavjević, Nebojša, *Serbia's Antibureaucratic Revolution: Milošević, the Fall of Communism and Nationalist Mobilization*, Basingstoke and New York 2008.

¹³³ Bošković, M., „Moćnici ne daju ključeve” *Jedinstvo*, 10.12.1985. (DCB, 1983...).

¹³⁴ Bošković, M., „Moćnici ne daju ključeve” *Jedinstvo*, 10.12.1985.

Резиме

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Имаш кућу – врати стан. Стамбене неједнакости, социјалистички морал и незадовољство у Југославији осамдесетих

Чланак истражује питања социјалне (не)једнакости, привилегија, класе, социјалистичког морала и приватизације друштвеног власништва у Југославији током осамдесетих фокусирајући се на становање. Локалне власти у Призрену, другом по величини граду на Косову, су 1982. године започеле кампању названу Имаш кућу, врати стан. Кампања је подстицала појединце да врате илегално коришћене станове у друштвеном власништву, како би се у њих уселили бескућници. Како је недостатак стамбених јединица у југословенском друштву већ био дугорочан проблем, акција се почетком 1983. године уз помоћ синдиката, симпатизера и медија проширила по остатку земље. Иако су југословенски закони изричито бранили паралелно коришћење друштвених станова уз поседовање приватних некретнина, ова правила су редовно заобилажена. Чланак прати развој кампање кроз новинске извештаје, радничка гласила, као и кроз интервјуе са радницима у Србији, провобитним иницијатором кампање и бившим председником призренске општине. Имаш кућу, врати стан нуди, на микронивоу, сликовиту студију случаја пропалих покушаја да се исправи растући јаз између теорије и праксе у југословенском јавном животу. Кроз кампању се може уочити и направити преглед већих, структуралних проблема Југославије осамдесетих година који укључују немоћ Савеза комуниста и институција самоуправљања да галванизују све више циничну јавност. Затим, проблема везаних за децентрализацију, не само између савезног и републичког нивоа већ и између општина и њихових републичких центара, као и проблема смањења јавне потрошње унутар услова економске стабилизације. Како кроз кампању, синдикати и симпатизери нису били у стању да систематски зауздају злоупотребу привилегија једног дела елита и обичних грађана, сама кампања је често била исмевана као испразни партијски слоган. Антиелистички сентимент очигледан у дискусијама о злоупотреби становања ће наћи свој израз неколико година касније током Антибирократске револуције 1988–1989.