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REPORT
 CD NO.

50X1-HUM

COUNTRY Yugoslavia
 SUBJECT Military - Air
 Economic - Aircraft production
 HOW PUBLISHED Daily newspaper
 WHERE PUBLISHED Zagreb
 DATE PUBLISHED 17 - 18 Jun 1952
 LANGUAGE Croatian

DATE OF INFORMATION 1952
 DATE DIST. 10 Oct 1952
 NO. OF PAGES 3
 SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

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SOURCE Borba.

DEVELOPMENT OF YUGOSLAV AIRCRAFT INDUSTRY

This report summarizes developments in the Yugoslav aircraft industry since 1946

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.

The first postwar exhibit of the Yugoslav aircraft industry opened in Belgrade 17 June 1952, resulting in reviews of its development as follows.

Restoration of Yugoslav aircraft factories began at the end of 1946. They were old and mostly small enterprises, such as the "Ikarus," "Zmaj," "Rogozarski," and "Utva" aircraft plants and the "Teleoptik" Optical Lens Enterprise. Their principal work consisted only of repairing military aircraft and the manufacture of small gliders. When the Five-Year Plan began functioning, the industry was given the task of producing engines, aircraft instruments, and equipment, and constructing several large and modern aircraft factories.

Even at that time the USSR attempted to prevent the development of a Yugoslav aircraft industry. The Yugoslav commission which went to Moscow in the beginning of 1948 to meet with Soviet technicians was told that the USSR did not think it necessary for Yugoslavia to build new aircraft factories, and therefore refused to send Yugoslavia necessary material.

By mid-1948, the construction of several large enterprises had begun, among them the "21 Maj" Engine Factory (Tvornica motora "21 Maj"), and the "Prva Petoljetka" Aircraft and Aircraft Hydraulic Equipment Factory (Tvornica aviona i avionskih hidraulicnih instalacija "Prva Petoljetka"). They were followed by the "Soko" and the "Rudi Cajevac" factories and others.

First, the "Ikarus," "Utva," "Teleoptik," and "Franjo Kluz" plants were rebuilt and expanded and immediately began extensive repairs on and production of aircraft, instruments, and parachutes. The construction of domestic types of

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aircraft also began, and Yugoslav designers achieved very good results, considering the fact that World War II had prevented them from utilizing the latest innovations developed during this period. (1)

Foremost among the Yugoslav aircraft industry's products is the Trojka, a small training and civil aircraft, designed by engineers Petkovic and Cijan and built by "Utva," which was serially produced in 1948. The same engineers designed the Aero-2 trainer for military pilots, which was produced serially by "Ikarus" in 1948. Thus far two models of this aircraft, a land plane and an aquaplane, have been produced. This aircraft is also suitable for crop dusting.

The Pionir aircraft was produced in the early days by the "Ikarus" plant, which considers it its greatest accomplishment. It is almost a miniature aircraft, with a wing spread of 4 meters. It is flown by the pilot in a reclining position. The plane is excellent for diving and is very maneuverable. This is actually an experimental plane and much is expected of it as further development on it proceeds. The plane's designer, Major Beslin, has also worked out an all-metal construction version of it, which is twice as fast and somewhat larger than the original model. Major Beslin, who is noted for his diverse designing, is among the first designers to begin carrying out the concept of designing for flying in a reclining position. (2)

Other aircraft [produced at this time?] include a transitional trainer designed by Engineer Sostaric. Other distinguished designers include Engineers Levacic and Curic.

The most rapid development in the Yugoslav aircraft industry took place in 1949, as a result of the economic blockade of the USSR and its Satellites. When these countries became a threat to Yugoslavia, the General Directorate of the Aircraft Industry was given the task of hurriedly designing a new fighter, to partially equip the Yugoslav Air Force. The result was the C-49, a combat aircraft, the first fighter to be produced in Yugoslavia, which was designed by Engineers Sivcev, Zrnica, and Popovic. By the beginning of 1949, most of the designing was completed. This work took 7 to 8 months, instead of 1½ to 2 years usually required for such a project. "Ikarus" immediately began serial production of the C-49, and by the beginning of 1950, C-49s were ready for delivery. (1)

Later, "Utva" produced the 212 designed by Engineers Sivcev, Zrnica, and Popovic, and the 213, designed by Engineers Sostaric, Dabinovic, Djuric, and Marjanovic. These are fighters used for training fighter pilots. They permit the freeing of combat fighter aircraft used heretofore for such training.

"Ikarus" also produces the 214 and the 215, which are training bombers. The 214, designed by Engineer Milutinovic, is noteworthy because its interior permits crew comfort. Engineer Milutinovic is noted principally for designing toward this end.

Two other aircraft of Yugoslav design built by "Ikarus" are the 920 transport glider, designed by Engineer Sostaric and introduced in 1951, and the Sc-49, which is now undergoing tests. The 920 has an enormous fuselage, so that a jeep or a mountain gun and crew can be transported. The Sc-49 is made of metal and can be considered as being among the best aircraft of its category in the world. It was designed by the same men who designed the S-49.

On exhibition were landing gear designed by Engineer Stanisavljevic and produced by the "Prva Petroljetka" and aircraft parts by the "Soko" Factory. "Teleoptik" exhibited an artificial horizon. "Rudi Cajevac" exhibited mechanical and electric aviation instruments, parts for electrical equipment, and the prototype of a receiving-transmitting radio station of domestic design.

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"21 Maj" exhibited its first aircraft engine. "Franjo Kluz" exhibited several versions of parachutes which Yugoslav parachutists have tested at various international parachute meets. (2)

The aircraft industry will be important for peacetime production. When the need for aircraft material ceases, the industry easily can be reorganized for the production of automobiles, busses, trolley busses, motorcycles, and equipment and instruments needed for industry, scientific institutions, and consumers.

All the enterprises listed are striving to continue to improve the quality of aircraft, engines, and other aircraft materials, and especially to improve production organization, which still shows strong traces of the small prewar semiskilled industry.

The Yugoslav aircraft industry has not yet reached the world level of aircraft technology either in designing or manufacturing, but is on the way to reaching that level relatively rapidly. Thus far, besides the several hundred fighters, transitional training, and combat aircraft which have been produced, a new series of combat aircraft, whose quality can successfully be compared with any aircraft of its category in the world, are being developed. (1)

SOURCES

1. Zagreb, Borba, 17 Jun 52
2. Ibid., 18 Jun 52

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