

EDITORIAL

WHAT CHARACTERISTICS SHOULD FORESTRY STAFF POSSES?

In the first three issues of Šumarski list of the year 1895, forest estimator D. Ilijić gave answers to this question, emphasising that any management organism must have a precisely defined sphere of individual organs' activities according to their capabilities. Otherwise an organism ceases to properly perform its functions. *It is a chaos and decline of economy*, he says, and particularly devastating for the global economy, as it *“represents bigger capitals”*, while the consequences are revealed only later; this is precisely the case with forestry, the main principle of which is sustained forest management. In the first article Ilijić discusses the capacities of a **county forester** at the level of property districts, which are according to the size of the property treated as big economies that *“compose the highest proportion of the national property”* (today they would be equal to the territorial range of the enterprise Croatian Forests Ltd.), where a county forester is the *“head of a property district forests. The properties that should adorn such an important person must not be just seeming, but should emerge from the very nature of this person and his deep belief in this most high task and profession.* Along with specialist education through practice, *“honest is the crown of this person to whom the millions of the national property have been trusted. Those who have not laboured hard in the forest while building up his theory will not enjoy the fruits of success.* “One's specialist education should be adjusted to the practice and the knowledge taken from encyclopaedic information in those disciplines, *“without which no intelligent man cannot afford to be”.* “Arrogant behaviour and rude manners” are condemned, while civilised and helpful advice-offering attitude toward inferior staff is suggested. *Steady honesty with full specialist education as well as diligence with consistency will certainly be a successful base upon which we shall be able to improve our already declining assets to at least some degree.* Therefore, competence and honesty above all.

Another profile of a specialised forester dealt with in the author's article is **accountant** *“of management offices”*, who also, according to law, has to be specialised in forestry and has passed the official examination required by the state. He substitutes the county forester in case of his absence. *“No forest management, even the smallest one, can function*

without the manager taking care of the property. He must be perfectly conversant in the theory of national management and its principles ..., and also must try hard to achieve, with other already acquired skills, the same experience in this field that is equal to that of a county forester, the head of the office.”

The question is whether today's accountants/executives take into consideration the multiple benefits of the forest, and how they should be treated without only considering the profit. Why was a forestry accountant required to be a forestry engineer by education 120 years ago, while today a forestry executive need not know anything about forests.

The third profile is **forester** (in those times it was a district forester, while today it is chief forest manager). Both previously mentioned profiles were *“much more free in their official status ..., because it is easier only to order than to listen and order”*. A forester must obey the orders of the management office, study them properly, establish their legal frames, and be careful not to do any damage. *“The first really difficult side of a forester's profession is based on the obligation that is prescribed by not understanding the individual local relations and needs, with fewer means for satisfying them”*. *It is difficult to fight against such anomaly, ... which is often defended by our law ... administrative sins mercilessly require their victims in the form of declining economy and unhappy staff which, though innocent, must accept the responsibility for all tragical consequences of the unsuccessful administration.* “The question is, *“if he cannot win it and save the forest goods, how should a forester act in this struggle, in order to at least save his personal honour?”* The author then points at the relation between the forester and his staff (in the first place forest rangers, whose profile is also discussed, as well as other employees).

This short foreword may encourage the readers of Šumarski list to read the whole text of about fifteen pages and learn more details of what the forestry profession once implied, and to compare it with today's practice; to define their standpoints toward the future of forestry and forest as the most complex of ecosystems. Under today's circumstances of both nature and society, this ecosystem needs even more knowledge than in the past, as well as a change of today's attitudes toward them.

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