

'Smiling' Russians Assigned to U.S.

"Don't get me wrong," said **David Horowitz** "I'm no communist sympathizer or anything like that . . . but I must pay tribute to the caliber of some of the correspondents the Russians and other communist bloc countries have sent to the U.S. in recent years."

Mr. Horowitz, newly elected president of the Foreign Press Association, New York, holds the opinion that the Russians and other East European countries are going to "considerable pains" to pick the "right" sort of reporters for "assignment to U.S."

"In the old days, they used to be of a type easily recognized; grim-faced, tight-lipped and uncommunicative. Nowdays, we're getting a crop of the young men, intellectual, gregarious and seemingly liberal guys," he said.

Mr. Horowitz knows what he's talking about. As an active member of the FPA and a correspondent based at the United Nations for the past 20 years, he says: "I've seen them all, a widely differing range of characters."

Problems Still Exist

But in speaking with Mr. Horowitz, it is also apparent—he does not emphasize the point—that reporters from Russia have in the past (and to some extent in the present) still provide the FPA with problems. For example, approximately 25% of the total U.S. is closed to reporters from the Soviet Union, although this ban does not apply to writers from East European countries. The State Department applies curbs on travel by Russian newsmen because similar sanctions against U.S. newsmen are upheld in Russia. Currently, there are 15 representatives of Soviet news media operating in the New York area.

"Our aim within the FPA," says its new president, "is to improve working conditions, to increase harmony and good fellowship between reporters assigned to the U.S., no matter where they come from."

From that comment the inference can be drawn that the FPA experiences a degree of embarrassment when certain of its members are precluded from taking part in some organized visits to areas otherwise open to foreign reporters.

"We've striven over the years, sometimes successfully, to get clearance for Russian writers to make these trips. But State Department permission is not always forthcoming. Obviously, we would not pursue this policy if security risks were involved. But let's face it, none of us are going to be given access to really secret material or installations if there is the remotest possibility of a breach in security occurring."

Asked to single out a typical example of the "new type" of Russian correspondent operating in the U.S., Mr. Horowitz pointed to Vladen Dubovik, saying: "He's Moscow Radio's man here and you couldn't wish to meet a nicer guy. He is on our executive committee and works well for the good of the FPA in all its many activities. He is easy to get along with and never introduces politics into the work of the association. On the other hand, nor do I . . . that's one of the lessons I learned a long time ago as a U.N. reporter."

From what Mr. Horowitz has to say it is evident that the near 400 representatives of foreign media in membership of the FPA really do have problems working within the U.S. While the government has done much to help, there are many organizations and officials who make it difficult for correspondents to gain facilities willingly given to reporters from American newspapers. This is particularly true for representatives of small, lesser-known foreign papers.

Battle With Broadway

For years, the Foreign press men in New York have been conducting a running battle with Broadway press agents, the FPA stage and screen committee continuously seeking admittance for representatives of some of the world's largest newspapers to opening nights on Broadway. "It's not just a matter of free tickets," says Mr. Horowitz, "more often than not we just cannot buy a first night ticket, press agents could not care less about the cultural aspects of the theater, they brush you off rudely, say they are not concerned what's printed overseas. This is all the more disturbing when you consider representatives of U.S. media are given excellent facilities in



FPA PRESIDENT David Horowitz shakes hands with U Thant, United Nations Secretary General.

most European countries."

As the FPA's new president, Mr. Horowitz is out to "promote the image" of the association, and to "broaden its activities." He makes this point: "We have an absolutely wonderful platform from which American politicians, diplomats and officials of all kinds can speak to the representatives of the world's press. My plans as president include getting a major speaker each month to address the association here in New York. If he has anything of value to say, it will be reported around the world by our membership."

David Horowitz, it should be stated, is used to dealing with diplomats and officials. He has covered the U.N. since its inception, writing a syndicated column via World Union Press of Israel which appears in 35 newspapers in the U.S., Canada, Italy, South Africa and Israel. It is also translated into several languages.