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Down and Out in Moscow..

Foreign correspondents are said to lead a cheery life, interviewing foreign ministers, monitoring small wars, occasionally essaying a journey to Katmandu or Kyrenia. But it is not always all that cheery because there is no telling how the reportage will be received by the, ah, host country. And since there is no other way to do it, really, other than to tell as much as you can tell of the story and take your chances, the repercussions can come swiftly and unpredictably. It doesn't even matter whether the regimes in question are nominally friendly or openly hostile; the test in most cases is whether they are totalitarian or relatively free.

Take, for example, our latest experience in this connection; the abrupt, not to say, rude ouster of *The Washington Post's* Moscow correspondent, Anatole Shub, on charges of having "slandered" the Soviet state. Mr. Shub had not filed a story in two weeks and he was to end his Moscow assignment in two months. Yet he was called in and ordered to leave the Soviet Union within 48 hours. The Moscow authorities did not specify which stories of Mr. Shub's had so outraged or alarmed or frightened them, as the case may have been, so we can only guess that it was a whole series of articles, having to do with political struggle in the Kremlin and the ascendant influence of the Red Army and the backlash felt by Soviet dissenters. At any rate, the Moscow authorities regularly harass the foreign press corps and occasionally kick one of their number out, just by way of keeping them all aware of what *can* happen to those who try to do an honest job.

An inability to countenance journalistic scrutiny is, of course, a familiar sign of immaturity, one seen in Moscow before but no less depressing on that account. The ouster of Mr. Shub can only call further attention to the insecurity in the Kremlin hierarchy of which he had written. In fact, his coverage in Moscow was no different in kind or intensity than the coverage routinely given by American correspondents to their own Government in Washington. It is more discouraging than irritating, to us, that the Russians still cannot abide a dedicated journalist doing an honest job.

...And Bangkok

This hasn't been one of our better weeks, foreign correspondentwise as they say, and not a great week for tolerance of the press. Talking about the Russians and *their* approach to this matter brings us back again to Thailand, whose government refused permission for our man in Hong Kong, Mr. Stanley Karnow, to enter Bangkok the other day for reason of his "vicious articles" against the regime. Thailand is quite a different case from Russia, of course; it is allied with us and heavily supported by American men, arms and money—mostly money—in exchange for the quite considerable Thai concession of having allowed us over the years to conduct a large part of the air war against North Vietnam from bases on Thai territory.

This is not an easy relationship, nor a very healthy one; it creates its own kind of tensions, internally and as between our two countries. And it has induced, on the part of the Thai government, a brand of nastiness quite on a par with that which can develop between avowed antagonists. We have in mind a letter which has come to our attention from Mr. Chawan Chawanidehaya, Thailand's ambassador to Malaysia, to the *Sunday Mail* of Kuala Lumpur, which puts a very dark and ugly cast on the Thai government's action against Mr. Karnow. The letter was sent to the *Sunday Mail* after that newspaper published one of Mr. Karnow's dispatches on the situation in Thailand and it reads, in part:

"Mr. Stanley Karnow, of Russian extraction and a Zionist activist, is no friend of Thailand perhaps not even of Asia. For many years, he has been writing disparaging remarks about Thailand and the Thai people, some of whom demanded that he should be declared unwelcomed (sic) visitor. Then he implored our authorities to allow him entry into Thailand. He did come and did meet some of our officials and held quite a different language with them. But after he left the country he would strike again like a poisonous snake . . .

"It should also be known that Mr. Stanley Karnow is not averse to performing under many patrons either Communist or non-Communist . . ."

A fellow can wait years before receiving a testimonial like that. ". . . of Russian extraction and a Zionist activist . . . strike again like a poisonous snake . . . not averse to performing under many patrons . . ." It is the most staggering collection of non-sequiturs this side of Hanoi radio, which specializes in running dogs, imperialist lackeys, evil intentions, and the like. It is well to bring these documents to light if only for the sake of encouraging the Bangkok regime to tell us precisely what it has in mind with regard to Mr. Karnow. Surely there is an innocent enough explanation. Or, alternatively, the Bangkok regime is every bit as thick-headed, repressive and ignorant as it sounds.

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