Interview with Vladimir Pozner
Political Observer

Rank if highest in journalism and has highest pay. They are in most newspapers, though not every one. No magazine has one. There are now 17 in Gostel

Usually 15-18 in Gostel
Novosti has about 5
Tass has a few
Pravda has 3
Izvestia has 3
Lit. Gaz has 2

Maximum of 40 in USSR

Pozner has no staff and few bosses. Only the deputy chairman and chairman of Gostel are their bosses. Not part of bureaucratic structure and no one accountable to them; and they accountable to few.

Certain programs always done by pol. observer: Today in the World is divided among them, one does it twice a week or so. Whatever else is done is choice of pol observer. If US is subject, the specialist pol. observers do it. There are specialists in foreign and those in domestic policy. Latter will hardly ever talk about former. e.g. Voznesensky on economic problems alone.

Space bridges. much less close now. Hasn't conducted one since San Francisco journalists. Will be involved in very few. Basically all shown on 1st Program. Strategy a mistake; public bored. Donahue bridges were a major change; a symbol of glasnost because of subjects. Were new, exciting. Followed by space bridges of low professional quality, not interesting--Sofia, Warsaw, Helsinki. Interest peaked. Wants to develop new formats.

Department of International Life: new department, headed by Edward Sorokin. For non-news in international relations. Dept where Pozner will go with new ideas.

Looking at monthly slot and would require permanent production crew. Would have its own unit in International life Dpt.

File name = SP/POSNER

VLADIMIR POSNER

Posner is now a "Political Observer." That is the highest formal rank (and pay) of any journalist in the USSR. In television there are now some 17 PO's. Pravda, Izvestia, Tass, Novosti each has 2-3. There are perhaps 40 PO's in the country. Each is usually somewhat specialized in a certain area. P's area is foreign relations, especially US.

A PO has no staff but also no (or few) bosses. P reports directly to the Deputy Chair of the State Committee. He develops program ideas and "sells" them to the heads of specific programs such as "In the World Today." They are usually supportive of his ideas, and give him the crew and staff needed to develop the program

P. has "moved away" from space bridges and is disappointed in the way they are now treated. His original idea was to have lay citizens interact sponaneously in front of large groups in situations of flexibility when changes, new ideas, new developments can occur. But to have senators and parliamentarians and other officials conduct teleconferences defeats the whole idea, makes for rehearsing fixed positions, boring debates.

P. is now working with Dept. of International Life (E.Sorokin, head). DIL can give him a monthly slot, permanent production crew, good support. He is planning new shows, 5 in the US, Donohue-type programs, along lines of his basic ideas of "citizen diplomacy." This format will be developed in the US (Seattle?) but for Soviet consumption. The idea is the generate "personal involvement...pressure on government."

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