

August 23, 1995

Professor Michael Goldsmith
P.O. Box 438
Provo, Utah 84602

Dear Professor Goldsmith:

Part of my duties for the Review Board involve identifying, locating, and obtaining for the John F. Kennedy Records Collection as many original assassination records as possible. I am currently trying to identify and locate the original, "out-of-the-camera" print of the film taken on November 22, 1963, by Orville Nix. This film is frequently referred to as the "Nix film."

It is unclear if the print of the Nix film currently in the JFK Collection at the National Archives in College Park, Maryland, (Archives II) is the "out-of-the-camera" print or if it is just an early generation copy. In trying to assemble the chain of custody of the original and the relevant copies of the film over the past 32 years I've read several letters you exchanged with Donald A. Burns of Baker, Hostetler & Patterson, the firm that represented United Press International (UPI). In 1977 UPI owned the copyright to the Nix film, having purchased it from the late Mr. Nix. UPI at that time also apparently had the original or an early generation print of the film, and it is that print you were negotiating with Mr. Burns about. As you may recall, the HSCA wanted the original print in order to conduct certain film enhancement tests. UPI's copyright in the film lapsed in the late 1980s, at which time UPI granted any rights it may have had to Mr. Nix's heirs. The issue of where the original print is located has been less easy to resolve.

In 1991 one of Mr. Nix's heirs, his granddaughter Gail Nix Jackson, requested that the original print be returned to her family. UPI told her they did not have the original and had no idea where it was. The National Archives told her that title to the version used by the Warren Commission had vested in the United States government in 1967 as a result of Public Law 89-318; however, they also said they could not determine for certain if the print then at the Archives was the original because certain "yellow flashes or camera stops typical of [a] camera original" did not appear on the Archives print.

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It is unclear from the paper trail if the HSCA received what it believed to be the original "out-of-the-camera" print of the Nix film and, if it did receive the original, what was done with the original when testing on it was completed. It is also somewhat unclear as to whether you understood or believed that the film you were negotiating with Mr. Burns about was the original.

I've enclosed copies of the relevant documents as they appear in the JFK Collection for your review. I will call you next week to discuss your recollections on this matter. Thank you once again for your cooperation with the Review Board's work.

Sincerely,

Anne Buttimer, Esq.
Chief Investigator

Enclosures