

To those of you who ordered copies of the Zapruder film of President Kennedy's assassination (*Obs.*, Nov. 21): I am currently weighing the legal implications of distributing the film. As anticipated, Time-Life, Inc., the holders of the copyright to the film, has been in touch with me. I have a lawyer looking into the situation; there is some possibility that precedent exists in law for "unauthorized" use of copyrighted material if the public need to know is sufficient.

I still am very much of a mind to seek as wide distribution of the film as possible. But first I must know where I stand legally in this. I anticipate deciding how to proceed by the first of the year. Additional copies of the film, in whatever quantity I need, are available, I have just lately been informed. So supply is not the problem. The question is: if I distribute the film and show it publicly, will Time-Life sue? If so, how expensive would defending such a suit be? And how likely of success (getting the film shown to the public at large) would it be?

I think what I would want of all this is that the film be shown on national television. There are questions of taste and purpose in this, of course. But I have shown the film to perhaps 60 or 70 people in the *Observer* offices and no one has found watching the film unbearable; indeed, most have agreed with me that it is an important document whose implications must be faced by the nation.

The response of the public to this has been surprisingly extensive. I have received orders for copies of the film on all but one day in the four weeks since I announced that copies might be available. These have come from a number of states and from Mexico, England, and Spain. Many of those who ordered copies wrote me that they have persisted in doubting that we know the truth of President Kennedy's loss.

Dailies at Chicago and Washington and in Europe have publicized the film's possible public availability. I showed the film to the Austin Capitol press corps but no stories resulted from that showing. Most of the reporters seemed not to think the film and its possible availability newsworthy. A couple of Capitol reporters declined, with some scorn, to view it.

So, give me a little more time in this. And if you are interested in receiving the film and haven't yet ordered it, please do so. Each order reconfirms my conviction that there is great public interest in this question and makes me that much more determined to press for widest-possible public viewing of the film.

G.O.

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