

Harold Weisberg
Hyattstown, Md. 20734
November 11, 1966

Mr. Irving D. Gewartz
6422 Walnut Hill Ln.
Dallas, Texas 75230

Dear Mrs. Gewertz,

It is months since I wrote Mr. Willis, and I am still glad to hear from you. My interest in your film now cannot be for my book, which I have completed. I nonetheless would like very much to see it for a number of reasons that I think are also to your advantage.

Should I want to use something from it in magazine writing I would, of course, pay you for it.

I believe yours is the Wolper film, and it is thus that I know of it.

I have spent a considerable amount of time investigating in this field and believe I have knowledge others do not have. I believe this knowledge can be of value to you if I find things in the film of which you are not aware because of this knowledge. I have done this with several other films.

I do not now think you can help me with my book, although I appreciate the offer. There is always the possibility that if I see your film and find something of interest that is applicable to the contents of the book I might want to negotiate for permission to use it. Frankly, at this moment I think that is doubtful. This is much more likely with magazine writing, which could enhance the value of your property. However, I think you should assess this against whether or not such publication would in any way interfere with your book. Without knowing what kind of a book you are working on I cannot give you an opinion, should you want one. The one thing I can promise you is that I will not steal your pictures and use them. If I find anything of interest in them I will tell you. My interest is in getting the whole truth out.

What I would like very much to see is all of the film, unedited, or if there is but an edited version, I'd like to have all the pieces edited out. What I have in mind I think I can arrange, and that is to have a friend with a major TV network examine the film with me and on their equipment. Thus if we find anything of value that you do not know I may be able to make a profitable arrangement for you. These people also would not be able to use your film without your approval. It is your property, and this includes the right to publication, unless it has already been put into the public domain, which it appears not to have been.

If yours is the Wolper film it would be important that I know who took each segment, where they were standing, what camera (lens) and film were used, as close as possible to the exact moment the pictures were taken, etc. Also, is there any footage you did not use? Further, it would be important to know whether anyone from the government ever saw or asked for or got copies or were notified of the existence of the film.

If yours is not the Wolper film, I'd still like to see it as soon as possible and to learn what I can about it. This is true of other film of which you might know taken at the time of the assassination, whether or not it shows the actual assassination. For example, pictures have value because of their backgrounds, because of what they contain the photographer might not have been aware of at the time he took the pictures. I fully expect several pictures which I do not own to have considerably more

value that is now the case as a consequence of my work.

I know there are many pictures in Dallas in which the government displayed no interest. I know who took some of them. It is just beyond my capacity to seek each of these people out. If you know any of them I will be glad to examine their pictures without charge and to tell them what I might see in them. It may be I can also arrange for publication, for I am in contact with several publications, one a major magazine, who do have an interest in the subject. What would be best for these people would be to send me, if still pictures, prints with their names on the back of each together with the notation not to be printed without their permission (written in such a way as not to deform the print). As with movies, each should have a statement of when, where and with what taken, etc.

One of the strange aspects of the case is that some pictures, ordinarily not publishable, might still have value because of what they show. This could be true or underexposed and overexposed film, for it is often possible to make things out on such film even if it is not up to professional standard, sometimes even if it is quite dark.

One other thing that is important, and that is whoever might have had possession of the film at any time. I think it is possible some of the film has been altered, and not by the owners.

Should you have any doubt about what I say or suggest, I encourage you to seek the advice of a lawyer. Film, like writing, can be a valuable property. I know I am not going to steal what you have or let anyone else do it, but you do not. You do not know me. Therefore, it is quite proper that you take what steps you think appropriate to protect your interest. I will sign any proper assurance you may want to protect your property.

There is an additional possibility of which you should be aware: aside from any commercial value your film or that of others may have, there is the possibility it may have national value, that is, both in terms of helping tell the story of the assassination and historic value. I should like permission from those who have such film to make arrangements for them to give (should they agree) what might be of interest to the National Archive or one being considered at a major university. This can be done with property rights preserved. It thus would be available for scholars to study and as part of our history, yet it could not be put to commercial use without the benefit that should accrue to the owner.

If you have any other questions, please ask me. I am anxious to see your film and all the others I can. I am also very pressed for time at the moment but will do this as fast as possible.

When you next speak to Mr. Willis, please tell him I have found in one of his pictures something of great importance that I think he does not know is there. I would again encourage him to let me study those he has not printed, subject to any reservation he might care to place upon them. I know of one major magazine that could be interested in whatever I might find, and I think it is quite possible I might find something. If he wants me to, I will go further and show them whatever I find and we can learn whether they are willing to pay him for the use of such picture or pictures. I think he has already lost much more than he realizes.

Thank you very much for writing. I am looking forward to hearing from you soon. My own equipment, so you will have no misgivings, is a Bolex projector and a Craig editor-viewer.

Sincerely yours,

November 7, 1966

Mr. Harold Weisberg
Hyattstown, Maryland, 20734

Dear Mr. Weisberg,

Mr. Phil Willis contacted us today saying that you were interested in obtaining our "President Kennedy Film." Is this for commercial use, personal use, a book, or what?

We are now in the process of writing a book and are working with a New York publisher on it.

Would you be so kind to inform us where you learned of the film?

Of course, if you are interested in working with us or us working with you, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Irving D. Gewertz

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