

From: [REDACTED]
To: [FN-OMB-IntellectualProperty](#)
Subject: Intellectual Property
Date: Wednesday, March 24, 2010 2:50:46 PM

Dear Ms. Victoria Espinel;

I am a photographer, now disabled, living in Lansdale, PA. For almost 60 years I travelled to many parts of the world documenting political and social change, believing that in doing so, I was living up to a responsibility to help bring information and news to a caring society. This work was difficult at times. I worked in "hot zones" where some of my colleagues were killed and I suffered from some minor accidents, illnesses, and PTSD.

All of this was worthwhile, since covering difficult situations helped bring back the information that citizens could use in making their decisions for the government in a democracy and influence public policy. It wasn't just a job, it was a calling.

In those years, all of my work was "freelance". There was no retirement package.

But, in my mind, my work was protected by copyright and the intellectual property belonged to me, and ultimately my family. Having that property, properly secured, would provide continuing income with its being re-licensed in publications. Over time the historical value would bring in a modest income to supplement my Social Security.

However, as the Internet developed, the ease by which photographs became technically very easy. One image, with political significance was hijacked and distributed to help influence the 2004 election. It, without permission, was used over 400 times and may have influenced the election results.

That, with other copyright thefts, has cost me well over six figures in licensing fees. More recently, a photograph, properly licensed by TIME, appeared on a Thursday on line. By Monday, it had appeared, without permission or licensing on six other sites. My archive, which I looked on as my 401K, is open to dilution by the out dated copyright enforcement requirements.

To protect my rights, I must be prepared to invest \$10,000 in attorney's fees per image. I must also take the time to track the pirates who look on my images as just "free to harvest", not unlike factory trawlers depleting the oceans.

My career is over. I suffered serious injuries while working for FEMA. My reliable file of stock images done while working for Time, Newsweek, Life, and other publications -- my "401K" is almost worthless.

I hope that, rather than making the situation worse, the administration will look to strengthen and promote copyright enforcement.

Regards,

Leif Skoogfors 215-855-9470

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