



S-0047-0001-008-00019

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Title

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Date Closed

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05/12/2006

Primary Contact

Home Location **S-0047-0001-008 (In Container)**Assignee **In Container 'S-0047-0001-008 (Souleymane Soukouna)' since 05/12/2006 at**

Priority

Local-container

Owner Location **Archives and Records Management Section**Record Type **Archival Item**

Date Published

Document Details

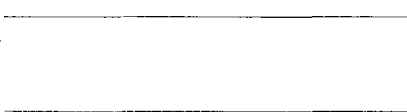
Container **S-0047-0001: DPI - General**

Notes

Record has no document attached.

Print Name of Person Submit Image

Signature of Person Submit





THE SECRETARY - GENERAL

ST
To Explain with
Pres of Seco + GA
David Smith.

TASA

Mr Riza is seeking
additional information
on this, probably
for Monday afternoon
he will contact
me on the road.
I would then take
appropriate decision
and convey to SIK
and S. J. ^{Do not}
keep me informed.

MEM for SG's attention (at convenience) 11/11

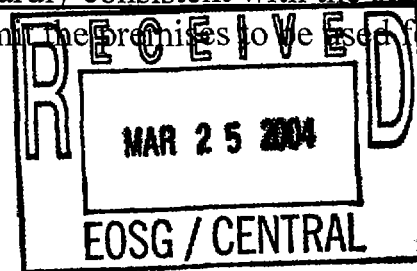
**Note to the Secretary-General
(through Mr. Riza)**

DPI

Ref: request to film on UN premises

Dear SG,

1. Please find attached notes to you from ST and HC, about a request from the film director Sydney Pollack to be allowed to film part of a thriller called "The Interpreter" in the UN building, including the GA Hall and Security Council Chamber.
2. I apologize for taking so long to pass this request on to you. (You will see that ST's note is dated 1 October and HC's 3 October.) I felt that since there is a disagreement between your senior advisers I should make an effort to understand the arguments on both sides and give you a clear recommendation.
3. You will see that ST strongly favours the proposal. Ms Bertini also supports it, on three conditions:
 - a) DPI to review the script to insure that it does not reflect negatively on the UN. (ST has done this, and considers that the film would be "in effect, an advertisement for the United Nations the likes of which we could never afford".)
 - b) "the appropriate GA/SC reps are consulted and agree". (ST proposes, with your support, to explore the request with the Presidents of the GA and Security Council.)
 - c) "the appropriate internal entities are included in the negotiation process (in this case OLA and Facilities Management)". (ST proposes that, if the GA and SC Presidents consent, OLA should negotiate the details of the arrangement.)
4. Mr. Corell and Mr. Zacklin are against. They say that to accede to the request would reverse a "long-standing policy of the Organization", based on a GA Resolution of 1946 and on an Administrative Instruction of 1996. Mr. Corell also suggests that granting the request would make it difficult to decline similar requests from other filmmakers. In his view it would be "hardly consistent with the stature and dignity of the Organization to permit the premises to be used for such purposes".



23-17640

19 Jan.

5. Personally I do not consider these objections decisive. The GA Resolution prohibits the use "for commercial purposes, by means of trade marks or commercial labels, of the emblem, the official seal and the name of the United Nations". It seems to be stretching the point to interpret this as applying to the making of a film on UN premises. The Administrative Instruction does say that meetings and events on UN premises "must be non-commercial in nature" but, as ST points out, this has not been consistently applied, and in any case it is within your power to alter an Administrative Instruction issued by your predecessor. As Mr. Zacklin concedes, it is for you to determine whether or not to accede to the request. As for the argument about setting a precedent, if Ms Bertini's conditions are observed any future request could be judged on its merits. And if the film is, as ST assures us, "supportive of the principles and purposes of the Organization", I do not see why allowing it to be filmed here would be incompatible with the Organization's "stature and dignity".
6. My recommendation would be, therefore, that you authorise ST to explore the request with the GA and SC Presidents and, if they agree, to ask OLA to negotiate the details with Mr. Pollack's studio.
7. If you agree to this, we should move fairly quickly now, since Mr. Pollack wishes to film in January and February.

Your sincerely, EM

Edward Mortimer

~~28 October 2003~~

6 November 2003 *EM*

cc: HC, ST

*56 P4H
My views coincide with
those of Messrs. Cornell & Zacklin.*

*My approval of the request
has been communicated
to SIR. Please ensure
that a copy is placed in
this file. NB: to
communicate my response
to Mr. Europe. R. 4/2*

DF



Edward Mortimer

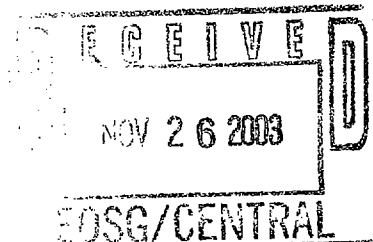
26/11/2003 05:58 PM

To: Shashi Tharoor/NY/UNO@UNHQ
cc: Chris de Bono/NY/UNO@UNHQ,
Paula Refolo/NY/UNO@UNHQ,
Jaya Dayal/NY/UNO@UNHQ,
Ruxandra
Ferascu/NY/UNO@UNHQ

Subject: Pollack []

I much regret that this has now come back from Riza with the note
"Discussed with SG & Dy SG, who endorse OLA's views. Not approved."
I am really sorry. After much careful deliberation I had come down firmly
on your side. But Riza was on the other, and that of course carries
greater weight.

23-17640



12/11 for SFF attention (at convenience) R/11

EM

P.2 R/26/11

Note to the Secretary-General
(through Mr. Riza)

SIR

May we discuss

Ref: request to film on UN premises

Dear SG,

K/15/11

1. Please find attached notes to you from ST and HC, about a request from the film director Sydney Pollack to be allowed to film part of a thriller called "The Interpreter" in the UN building, including the GA Hall and Security Council Chamber.
2. I apologize for taking so long to pass this request on to you. (You will see that ST's note is dated 1 October and HC's 3 October.) I felt that since there is a disagreement between your senior advisers I should make an effort to understand the arguments on both sides and give you a clear recommendation.
3. You will see that ST strongly favours the proposal. Ms Bertini also supports it, on three conditions:
 - a) DPI to review the script to insure that it does not reflect negatively on the UN. (ST has done this, and considers that the film would be "in effect, an advertisement for the United Nations the likes of which we could never afford".)
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23-17640

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6. My recommendation would be, therefore, that you authorise ST to explore the request with the GA and SC Presidents and, if they agree, to ask OLA to negotiate the details with Mr. Pollack's studio.
7. If you agree to this, we should move fairly quickly now, since Mr. Pollack wishes to film in January and February.

Yours sincerely, EM

Edward Mortimer

28 October 2003

6 November 2003 EM

cc: HC, ST

SG F44

My views coincide with those of Mr. Conell & Zacklin.

EM

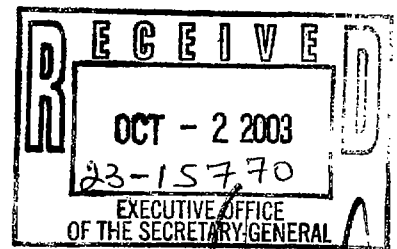
Discovered by SP & Dy SP, who endorse OLA's views.

Not approved.

Doubt.

[Signature]

EM



NOTE TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Request by prominent filmmakers to film on UN premises

As I mentioned to you briefly, I have received a request from award-winning director Sydney Pollack (*Out of Africa*, *Tootsie*) to be allowed to film part of a new feature film entitled "The Interpreter" in the United Nations building, including the General Assembly Hall and the Security Council in January and February. Following consultations with Ms. Bertini and Mr. Zacklin (see below), I seek your support to explore this request with the Presidents of the General Assembly and Security Council, with a view to agreeing to it, in principle, if the Presidents are also in agreement.

The movie is a thriller about a UN interpreter. It has a positive message about the value of diplomacy, reconciliation and forgiveness, and an uplifting conclusion that is, I believe, supportive of the principles and purposes of the Organization. In other words, as a mainstream film it would in effect be an \$80 million commercial for the UN. In addition, if it is successful the movie could provide a tremendous fillip to the Organization's profile with ordinary moviegoers everywhere: something we could well use given the slump in public support that has followed the events of this year.

The filmmakers seek to make the movie as realistic as possible, and have consulted extensively with DPI staff and others concerning its accuracy. They have offered to bear any additional security and other costs incurred as a result of the filming, to work mainly on weekends, to negotiate with us to minimize any disruption, and to accept in advance any schedule changes that might be required as a result of unexpected meetings by our legislative bodies. They are also willing to make a significant donation to the UN.

The Under-Secretary-General for Management, Ms. Bertini, is in favour of this proposal. Mr. Zacklin's response to my request for advice on this matter was, however, that it has "consistently advised against this type of activity" on the basis of GA resolution 92 (1946) and a 1996 Administrative Instruction (ST/AI/416) which states that "proposed meetings and events must be consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations and must be non-commercial in nature". I respectfully disagree with this advice.

First of all, the provision has not been consistently applied. We regularly rent part of the building - the Delegates' Dining Room - for commercial purposes. We have held exhibitions sponsored in part by commercial firms. The 50th Anniversary celebrations were supported by commercial firms, whose names and logos were prominently displayed on the premises.

Second, and more important, whilst I understand OLA's concern (and there are certainly some projects, including movies, which do not warrant our cooperation), I think that a blanket rejection of proposals that are consistent with the United Nations' principles and purposes, merely because they are commercial, rather than following a case-by-case analysis of the proposals, would be a mistake. Allowing filming in the building is not, in any case, the same as permitting a "meeting or event".

In today's world, governmental organizations have taken a more imaginative view of the matter than does OLA. I note that the CIA, for instance, has recently reversed its traditional policy of blanket rejection and now reviews proposals for filming on its premises on a case-by-case basis, cooperating with the entertainment industry on projects it considers accurate, if it can do so without interfering with its mission. In recent years, it has permitted television series and feature films to be shot inside CIA Headquarters. In the words of the *New York Times*, by doing this "it hopes both to get out what it calls the truth about the agency and to explain to a sceptical public why ... it needs a budget of some \$30 billion a year". Although our problems are not the same as those of the CIA, the potential benefits to the Organization - measured in increased public understanding of our work and support for our requirements - are similar.

I have reviewed the script of this movie and spoken with the director, and although it is clearly a commercial activity, the end product would be, in effect, an advertisement for the United Nations the likes of which we could never afford. In addition, I note that the movie will go ahead irrespective of our participation, although at greater cost to the producers and with less opportunity for us to influence the portrayal.

I therefore strongly recommend that we agree in principle to this request, as a first step towards a more open and constructive position on requests from the entertainment industry. If you accept my recommendation I will discuss the proposal with the Presidents of the Security Council and the General Assembly, and, if they consent, request OLA to commence negotiations on the details with the studio.

Thank you.

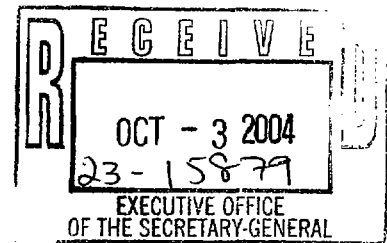


Shashi Tharoor
1 October 2003

EM

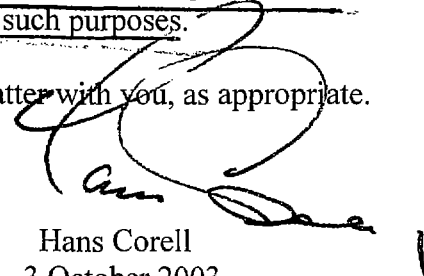
Note to the Secretary-General

Re: Commercial film



(#23-15770 → EM)

1. This refers to Mr. Tharoor's Note to you of 1 October 2003, a copy of which has been forwarded to me, concerning the request by the filmmaker Sydney Pollack to film part of a new feature film on UN premises.
2. Mr. Tharoor's Note did not include a copy of Mr. Zacklin's Note to him of 22 September 2003 concerning this matter. I attach herewith a copy of that Note, in order to avoid any misunderstanding of our views on the request. As we indicated, the long-standing policy of the Organization is not to authorize the use of UN premises for filmmaking activities. Already in the 1950's, the Organization declined authorization to such a request by Alfred Hitchcock to film "North by Northwest" on UN premises. We are also concerned that should the present request be granted, it would be difficult to decline similar requests from other filmmakers to use the UN premises for commercial purposes.
3. I believe that it is hardly consistent with the stature and dignity of the Organization to permit the premises to be used for such purposes.
4. I am, of course, available to discuss this matter with you, as appropriate.



Hans Corell
3 October 2003

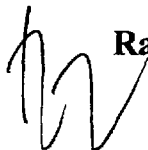
cc: Ms. Bertini
Mr. Tharoor
Mr. Zacklin

Note to Mr. Tharoor

Re: Commercial film.

1. Following our informal discussion of this matter on Thursday 18 September 2003 I undertook to review the legal aspects in the light of the details of the project that you provided to Mrs. Bertini and myself. You will recall that I had expressed my initial doubts that OLA would be in a position to give its legal blessing to this proposal in view of its long-standing interpretation of General Assembly resolution 92(I) and the consistent policy and practice that has been followed with regard to activities of a commercial nature.
2. In addition to resolution 92(I) the use of UN premises is specifically governed by Administrative Instruction ST/AI/416 (copy attached) paragraphs 7 and 11 of which would in our view preclude the shooting of a commercial film on UN premises. It is on this basis that we have consistently advised against this type of activity.
3. The proposal also raises additional concerns which would require careful review including: whether the proposed film may harm the image of the UN; precedent setting; and the objections or criticisms of member states.
4. It is, of course, for the SG to determine whether or not to accede to the request. However, if the proposal is to be put to him, I would be grateful if you would ensure that the views of OLA are considered by him.

22 September 2003

 **Ralph Zacklin**

cc: Ms. Bertini
Mr. Corell
Ms. Wong ✓
Mr. Terekhov