

L-Mabel -Joseph-20050506153003

To: Julie L. Sigall  
Associate Register for Policy & International Affairs

Date: 05/06/2005

From: Joseph L. Mabel

Comment:

I am a major contributor of content to Wikipedia (en.wikipedia.org) and a lesser contributor to other associated projects. We make scrupulous efforts to track down copyright holders and get permissions before using any particular work, but often it is simply impossible to determine if there might be someone out there who still has the rights to, for example, an uncredited or poorly credited photo from the 1940s (especially from areas that have experienced war or ethnic strife), or an article from a long-defunct magazine. Please, the public interest is best served by a legal regime under which after a legitimate, good faith search for the copyright holder of long out-of-print material, one may make material available to the public, rather than leaving it tied up and unavailable on the theory that an owner might someday emerge.