

# NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Television

1 February 2011

Dear Jake:

Your letter to [REDACTED] has been referred to me for response. This response reflects the position of National Geographic Television on matters of consultant review of our programs.

Jake, this is not a misunderstanding of the nature of journalism. This is a misunderstanding regarding your role as consultant to the program. National Geographic never intended for you, personally, to fact check the entire program, line by line. Rather, you were hired for your expertise on the subject matter and your consultation was to assure the general accuracy of the subject in the Program. As this is the presumption for your review, all of the back-up materials you requested are not necessary because you only need to opine on the Program as presented in its final form. We both agree that National Geographic Television has final editorial control in this matter.

At the meeting scheduled for February 6, 2011, we will provide you with a script and we will bring a copy of the fine cut of the Program. We will arrange for Todd Hermann, Director of Research for NGT Standard & Practices, and myself to be present to record your notes and comments.

This is the process that National Geographic Television has engaged in with countless consultants for hundreds of hours of programming. National Geographic Television has produced programs before on criminal enterprises and sensitive subject matter, using the same standards and practices process. That process adheres to the highest factual and journalistic standards, and involves independently verifying all statements of fact, then making sure the program meets our requirements for nuance and balance in its depiction of characters and issues. The success of our painstaking process is reflected in over 1,000 Industry Awards for Excellence and 138 Emmy Awards. We understand your concerns, but this Program has been subject to the same rigors as any other similar programs.

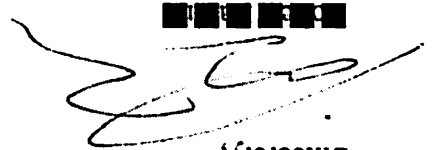
National Geographic Channel (Japan) and National Geographic Magazine (Japan) have no interest or editorial involvement in this Program. There appears to be no reason to make them part of the review process. At your request, we have taken pains to assure that the Program is not made available in Japan. While a copy of the Program may find its way to YouTube in Japan, our experience is that YouTube will take a program down at the request of the copyright holder.

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Because we are on a schedule to complete this Program and deliver it to the broadcaster, we must stick to the meeting scheduled for Sunday, February 6<sup>th</sup> in Washington, DC. If you are willing to review the Program on the terms that have been outlined in this letter and other National Geographic correspondence, we would be happy to follow through with arrangement of the meeting on Sunday.

If you determine that you cannot review the Program, we will respect your decision. As you may recall, you have the option of having your name removed from the Program. We can accommodate such a request.

Sincerely,



Executive Producer, EXPLORER



[illegible]

Sincerely,

Jake Adelstein

cc: [REDACTED], Head of National Geographic Television  
[REDACTED] Director of Development National Geographic  
Television

████████████████████ SVP Business Development and Operations  
 ████████████████████ National Geographic Television  
 ████████████████████ VP and Associate General Counsel  
 ████████████████████ National Geographic Television

**Figure 1**

**A portion of the redacted internal emails From National Geographic Television on the dangerous circumstances created by the film crew, received from anonymous source.**

Note: The document has been redacted, for safety concerns, as best as possible although it is very easy to determine who the is the head of National Geographic Television by a simple Google search. I have highlighted some sections to illustrate a point. Please note the email from the President of NGT in which he writes "*Our department of Standards and Practices will review the entire film thoroughly before it is broadcast to insure that the show complies with our standards of **factual accuracy** and journalistic integrity.*" Please compare that with the words of the executive producer in the February 1<sup>st</sup> letter where "*factual accuracy*" has become "*general accuracy*." As for the NGT standards of *journalist integrity*, I have no idea what they are. I keep asking but get no reply. I'm sure they exist in some form or another but at what level, I have no idea.

I have admiration for the one individual in the firm who showed some grasp of the dangers and genuine concern for the safety of others. (see last email).

People like him are usually the first ones fired when trouble breaks. People with integrity are always a pain in the ass for those without any. He did not provide me with the emails, to the best of my knowledge, but I'm sure he'll be a suspect. Good luck.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 29, 2010  
**To:** [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]



██████████ President, National Geographic Television Tel. 202  
828-6606 Fax 202 862-8235

----- End of Forwarded Message

**From:** ██████████

**Sent:** Tuesday, September 28, 2010

**To:** ██████████; ██████████; ██████████

**Cc:** ██████████; ██████████; ██████████; ██████████;  
██████████

**Subject:** RE: Inside Yakuza - Shoot Schedule

Dear All,

I would like to follow up on ██████████'s earlier email and address some points made in the subsequent email responses.

The current issue is not merely a sensitive subject matter about revealing the identities of the members. This faction of the yakuza, the ██████████ group, has made a request, which is not to use the footage at all. The letter by ██████████ (to ██████████) and the email by ██████████ (to ██████████) are basically saying that we will use the footage but do the utmost not to reveal identities. To be clear, this is not what is being requested and assurances about voice and face blurring will not satisfy ██████████'s request. In fact, Jake Adelstein is saying that the letter has made the yakuza more upset, since to them, it is merely side-stepping the issue.

Also, although the show will not be broadcast in Japan, communication from ██████████ specifically mentions Youtube, which we infer to mean that as long as the footage will be broadcast, there is the possibility that it

will appear on Youtube or other internet sites. In other words, the fact that the show will not air Japan is not satisfactory to [REDACTED]

The yakuza organization is an active and dangerous organization in Japan and their threats should not be taken lightly. They have already stated that if their request is not obeyed that the Japanese organizations of National Geographic will be responsible.

Lastly, I'd like to add that no means of identity protection will work in Japan. There are no secrets in Japan, as the famous saying goes.

My apologies for the directness of this email but I feel it is warranted due to the very dangerous circumstances surrounding the recent turn of events.

Best,

[REDACTED]