

Strictly embargoed until 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2009

## The Lost Archive

### *Historic time capsule of news footage recovered from WWII bunker*

A treasure trove of historical footage which has been stored in General Dwight D. Eisenhower's former World War II headquarters has been resurrected by The Associated Press as part of a major restoration project. The news organisation's project is unveiling a vast archive of film footage providing new perspectives on past events from the 1960s and 1970s. AP Archive is making the footage available in high definition.

"The range and quality of what we're finding in this lost archive is breathtaking and it's incredibly exciting to be unearthing new history in this way," commented AP's Director of International Archives, Alwyn Lindsey. "For filmmakers, the archive is a treasure chest of fresh footage that's readily available in HD and no longer do they have to rely on the same shots that may have been used by other producers dozens, or even hundreds of times before," he added.

The project has unveiled new colour footage of key political figures from the era including a young Yasser Arafat, Libya's Colonel Gadhafi immediately after taking power, Richard Nixon with Nicolae Ceausescu, Fidel Castro meeting Latin American and Eastern European leaders, and a young Saddam Hussein in Paris. Celebrities also feature and include Jane Fonda's controversial visit to North Vietnam at the height of the Vietnam War, Elizabeth Taylor's star-studded 40<sup>th</sup> birthday party, as well as a host of performers ranging from Joan Baez to Barbara Streisand. In addition to coverage of the events and the people that shaped the 1960s and 1970s, the new footage captures the mood of the period, documenting youth and popular culture: from hippies at music festivals and amazingly bizarre fashion shoots, to footage of protests and anti-war demonstrations.

Twenty-thousand film cans containing 3,500 hours of international news footage have been lying dormant for decades deep underground in the Central London bunker from which Eisenhower directed the D-Day landings. Although the films themselves have been well preserved, the numerous pieces of text catalogue that accompanied them were scattered across various locations in the UK and US. The text catalogue is essential as it identifies what footage is held in each film can and without it, the archive has been virtually inaccessible since the day the films were first produced.

This "lost archive" is the legacy of United Press International Television News (UPITN), which was a major television news agency from the early 1960s to the mid 1980s. UPITN was at the forefront of international newsgathering and had a vast network of foreign bureaux around the world with film crews capturing images of the events and people that defined the era. It went through several changes of ownership before being renamed WTN (World Television News), and its holdings were purchased by AP in 1998 as part of its acquisition of WTN.

AP's footage business, AP Archive, assembled a team of leading archival researchers to painstakingly piece together the scattered paper records and to create a coherent online text database. The films themselves are being cleaned and restored by Laboratoires Éclair of Paris, and then transferred onto high definition videotape for use by professional producers. AP Archive is also digitising the films so that they can be viewed online via its website [www.aparchive.com](http://www.aparchive.com)

AP Archive will shortly complete the first phase of the project, which represents half of the collection. Already, 17,000 stories from the late 1960s to the mid 1970s have been restored and digitised with 700 stories being added each week.

A specially cut showreel of the footage with a soundtrack provided by T-Rex's *Children of The Revolution* has been produced and can be viewed online at [[www.lostarchive.co.uk](http://www.lostarchive.co.uk)]

## **Notes to Editors**

### Technical Information

The archive is held on 16mm films. The films were shipped to Laboratoires Éclair in the outskirts of Paris where they were cleaned, restored and transferred onto the high definition videotape format HDCam SR. Videotapes were then shipped back to AP Archive's specialist cataloguers in London who viewed the footage and created online text descriptions and rights information, piecing together the disparate paper records that existed and using their historical knowledge. The footage has been digitised in both browse and broadcast resolutions and stored on AP Archive's video servers. Both the text catalogue and the digitised video is then published on the AP Archive website [www.aparchive.com](http://www.aparchive.com) allowing users to instantly search for and view the newly restored footage online.

### Background Information on UPITN

The origins of UPITN stretch back to the early 1950s when the major news agency, United Press began collaborating with Twentieth Century Fox Movietone to provide international television stations with syndicated newsfilms under the name UP-MT. In 1963, the collaboration with Movietone ended giving rise to the new name UPITN (United Press International Television News), the new company competing head to head with Visnews (later acquired by Reuters).

During its time, UPITN was a prolific news gatherer and had film crews located throughout the world. It covered international news stories in great depth and news stations around the world came to depend on its daily syndication of film stories. It had crews located in all of the world's news hotspots including Vietnam, Cambodia, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America and on both sides of the Iron Curtain.

The ownership of UPITN changed hands a number of times until being renamed WTN (World Television News), with United Press at this point no longer having any association with the company. The Associated Press set up a rival television news service called APTV in 1994 and then acquired WTN in 1998 to form APTN. The archive of UPITN came with the acquisition. However, the archive was badly organised lacking a coherent text catalogue. Consequently, the films were kept in deep storage in The Eisenhower Centre in Central London and largely unused. Much of the news footage that we're used to seeing from the period is sourced from the rival Visnews collection so the resurrection of the UPITN collection brings to filmmakers a vast resource of untapped footage that not only provides a different perspective on past events, but also brings to them new footage that has not been seen since the day it was shot.

### About AP Archive

AP Archive is the video footage collection of The Associated Press, with material dating back to the beginning of the 20th century. With an archive of over 700,000 stories, it is rich in its coverage of events, war and conflict, politics, disasters, environment, culture, social history, human interest, science, entertainment and sport. The collection is updated daily with the global news coverage of AP Television News and contains footage from many major content partners including ABC News, Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Sky News and China State Television.

### About The Associated Press

The Associated Press is the essential global news network, delivering fast, unbiased news from every corner of the world to all media platforms and formats. Founded in 1846, AP today is the largest and most trusted source of independent news and information. On any given day, more than half the world's population sees news from AP.

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