

John Christian

September 26, 1967

Dear Hal:

This fat sack of goodies is merely my way of getting back at you with bulk alone; if only it all were bulk we could save a fortune using Fourth Class mailing priveleges; to think the two of us are in any way helping to support the current Government and/or any of its agencies does unrest my gizzard; but all this is tantamount to wishing a parallel AT&T is just over the horizon to give us "freedom of choice". Let us pray (prey), sweet children.

I'm not sure Dick Wartes letter requires any extensive elaboration; this man is the most erudite tactician on business matters I know; his politics should be self-explained within his letter to me --- they are my own -- with his own reservations.

My note to Starr is intentionally abrupt; if it is that his amnesia-like performance is going to hang me up, then we both should know where we stand, assuming his word is going to make the difference.

I have been in deep conference with the man who gave birth to and delivered Fred Goerner's "The Search for Amelia Earhart"; as I said he got involved when the entire subject was no more than the fettered brainchild of newsmen Goerner, when there wasn't word-one on manuscript, when there wasn't dime-one in the developmental kitty. The book has sold well over a half million copies at \$6 a clip. Naturally, he has a contractual beef with the artist; naturally, I have pro gratused some advice as how he can resolve the "misunderstanding"; His name is Matthew Katz, pronounced (by him) as Cates, which only shows you what a truly Christian influence I can have over people. Whatever, he is an experienced negotiator, and he is a tough bugger to boot. Not that I'm not tough, but one must remember that us Christians is gent(i)le folk.

He did, in fact, pick up the phone today and call Joe Pasternack at 20th Century to broach his level of cognizance/interest; the answer was "I think the public is sick and tired of the whole schmeer", but no complete kiss-off. What I'm trying to say is that Matt has the access and will to break ice.

Matt got a \$50,000 advance from Doubleday for the Goerner book; this has got to be good by any standards; also, the book had its belated controversy because of the post-war Japan-American reconciliation; Matt got run out of Japan when he appeared on Nippon TV to discuss the book (before publishing) and appeal to the populace for additional info. (He got some damned interesting responses; like eyewitnesses on Saipan, plus photos.) I think I can get him as the future ramrod-liaison for hardcover/paperback sales of your works. His only question: What about Weisberg's obligations to Starr? My answer: The pie is fat enough for everyone to be happy. Don't you agree?

Assuming you accept the above premise about Katz' forte, he requests that I give him all the names of the parties and publishers/editors with whom you have ever discussed the publishing of WHITWASH et al with; from there he will pick an opening and go to the upper echelons necessary. It's up to you.

As with the lawyers etc. et al I (ALFSE ENG, LIMITED) will make all arrangements through the business aegis, under the contract with you.

About the PLAYBOY article: Might I suggest that you write Garrison a release for those aspects of his interview which were proprietary (copyrighted). In this way, the question of prior use or "public domain" cannot become viable for those we will probably file suits against. I want ~~to~~ to do this, just in case. No time to broach it with Counsel at this nebulous stage. Also, I'm somewhat shocked at LIFE's whack at Garrison over the underworld (Marcello) ties, etc. Can you do something about this at either end? TIME-LIFE, Inc. seems to be confused about the functions of its corporate butt and mouth.

Finally, let me comment on the on the second paragraph of your last (9/23) letter: Your reluctance is quite understandable, since you've been "had" bad in far too many instances. but to not know the exact position of your own (business) affairs, under yours or others' direction, is asking for ultimate disaster. There's nothing profound about my observation; but there is with your current circumstance.

It may sound corny — but time's awastin'!.....

My best to your little woman.

Best Personal Regards,
John