

Rt. 12, Frederick, Md. 21701
8/15/75

Dear David,

The books and your letter of the 11th both came yesterday. Thanks for both.

Let me explain the situation on Oswald in New Orleans so we can figure out if the tracing you've done can be of some help.

The publication deal was an unusual one in which, in lieu of an advance, I was given a 50% interest in the net. The publisher distributed through Pocket Books, which refused to handle the subject. Neither of us knew this until close to pub date. I learned later, of course, when there was no real alternative for either of us. The practical effect was almost to keep the book off sale because what gets onto the racks is controlled by truck drivers part of whose income is commissions. There was no net. The book did poorly. For all practical purposes, Pocket killed it.

So, we had to improvise. One of these efforts involved a luftmensch I did not then know to be a dubious character, one John Christian. His family then was in Carmel and I later learned he was living with a woman in S.F., on Pacific Avenue. The last I heard of John he was somewhere in the L.A. area.

I then had a good friend in Oakland, Hal Verb, from whom I've not heard in some years. He was then at 753 1/2 Warfield Ave. Phone 839-4674. He made no living for a long time and then got a job and developed a sideline which kept him very busy as he struggled to get back onto his feet. Hal may remember this Pacific Avenue address. That is where the books last were. Christian got 5,000 of them without paying for them. He refused to return them without prepayment of shipping costs. I finally got a guarantee on this from the publisher, who was very kind about it, and then John simply would do nothing.

I know they placed some books with L & S, which strangely refused to put them on sale on the theory they'd sell better when Garrison finally got into court! However, I do not know how American News got them. I imagine from the publisher in NYC. If they did these are not my copies. If they came from the Christian supply they are. What tends to make me believe they can be from the Christian supply is their condition. Also, it is not the practise to warehouse paperbacks. American News would have sold every copy by merely having a few places of sale. Unless a few boxes were misplaced I'm inclined to think these were not from their original purchase. Not when they closed out their West Coast operations a year ago. Or, there is also reason to believe that these can be from the supply that is my property if it still exists.

It is beyond my capacity to follow this, much as I'd like to. I get up early each morning and work until late at night and can't keep up. If you can get Hal Verb to be responsive we might learn that address on Pacific and see if the books are still there. Maybe I had the address. If Christian is back in the Bay area, Hal might be able to learn it and I might then be able to do something. Christian did place some books in a few store but he never paid for any.

If there is anything further you can do on this I'd appreciate it.

We are using up the wrong-sized envelopes for WW IV when we have orders for two books. I generally go around the perimeter with 1" masking tape and then the ends with inexpensive Scotch tape. I also encircle both ways with at least two runs of this Scotch tape. The primitive manner in which I have to work limits my packaging facilities and time. I do the packaging in the living room while looking at TV news. So, I have to use tape in hand dispensers except for the masking tape. This makes the large roll of 3/4" tape impractical because it requires a large dispenser. I'd prefer the reinforced tape but it is too costly.

Many thanks,