

Route 8, Frederick, Md. 21701
1/5/72

Dear Bob,

To my regret, there was no promotion on my last book and I didn't get to California. I wanted to see you and Jessica for a number of reasons, one of which I'll address now.

Inventing the "underground" book and making a success of it was not the romantic thing it appeared to be from radio and TV. It was disastrous. Wholesalers just didn't pay or didn't file claims for damaged books, and the amount out of which one publisher, Dell, cheated me is more than the average successful book yields. They even printed editions they haven't accounted for. I have copies. I've had a whole chapter plagiarized in an anthology and can't even get payment for the part of another chapter contracted for. The abuses and crookedness run the gamut.

One of the results was a powerful curse on me in publishing. I am the ~~closest~~ closest thing to an unpublishable author. And I am loaded with literary properties that should be commercial and worthwhile, not on assassinations only.

A California wholesaler owes me more than \$4,000, not counting interest. He just doesn't answer letters. The last I heard from him was two years ago November, when he sent me a copy of his ledger sheet that, in fact, shows that he does owe me money. I have just written him again. Each time our situation gets really desperate, I try to collect.

I am so broke I can't think of hiring lawyers. My indebtedness is something like \$35,000 and we have virtually no income.

It thus is impossible for me to sue in the courts of other states. What I am wondering is if I could collect if I sue here and get a judgement. Could I then go to the California courts with this judgement and get it enforced? Is so, would you do it for me and take your fee from it?

In the sense of what it has produced, my work had been remarkably successful. On the JFK assassination, I have in my possession - properly, not clandestinely - what was withheld from the Warren Commission. Aside from hard work and much of it and correct analysis, the means may interest the lawyer. I used the Freedom of Information law, 5 U.S.C. 552. Once I established that I would, it then became wiser to let me have what I asked for to avoid the possibility of sensational attention in court. In one case I actually got a summary judgement against the Department of Justice. One of these cases is on appeal and will probably go to the Supreme Court and become precedent on one of the exemptions of the law, the investigatory-files exemption. At this point, other interesting questions will come up. I filed a statement with the Judiciary Committee against one of the Nixon appointees, Powell, and Rehnquist was then in Justice and I'm sure was in on the case.

The pressures are great. I guess it would sound paranoid. I have carbon copies, not xeroxes, of CIA surveillance on me. I have just, with the Watergate Case, figured out some of the things that happened to me years ago. My then Congressman, a friend, read my first book in manuscript. He is a lawyer, then on the Judiciary Committee, as he is now in the Senate. He told me that each time I went to a publishing house I was followed by a federal agent, something I never believed. In May of 1965 I made a deal with the Saturday Evening Post for use of some of that book. They sent me to an agency, which was excited about that and another book they felt would make a movie, a sort of Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House and The Egg and I. Within a very short time, the deal was dead and the agency had no interest in anything. It now turns out that while E. Howard Hunt was with CIA, after his Bay of Pigs career, going back to 1965, he was also with this agency. Small world, huh?

I'll ask a Bay area friend to address and mail this.

Thanks and best regards,

Harold Weisberg