

Guccione won't cooperate with FBI in Unabomber case

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Penthouse publisher Bob Guccione won't talk to the FBI about a phone call his magazine received from someone who may be the Unabomber.

"I'm not personally interested in cooperating with the FBI," Guccione said Friday in an interview from his New York office. In a letter last month to The New York Times, the person claiming to be the bomber promised to stop his 17-year reign of terror if a major media outlet published his lengthy manifesto.

The letter specifically mentioned the Times, and Time and Newsweek magazines. All three publications were non-committal. But on Monday, Guccione, chairman of General Media; International which publishes Penthouse and Omni magazines, urged the mail-bomb terrorist in an open letter to "contact me at your earliest convenience."

"I am making one or several of my magazines available to publicize your message," he said in the letter, adding that he was "making this offer to save lives."

After Guccione made his offer, Penthouse received a call from someone who said, "I have something Mr. Guccione wants to publish," Guccione said Friday. Unlike other calls Penthouse received, this one sounded legitimate, he said. "We're waiting for that individual to call back," Guccione said, adding that he has "a way of determining absolutely whether he's the real McCoy or not." He would not say what that method was, but in letters, the Unabomber has used a nine-digit code for authentication.

Penthouse publisher Bob Guccione says he won't cooperate with the FBI, even though his magazine may have received a call from the notorious Unabomber.

Federal law enforcement officials who spoke on condition of anonymity said they were skeptical of the call, given that the Unabomber usually relies on letters. Joe Valiquette of the New York FBI office said the bureau had talked to Penthouse security officials, but that he could not comment further.

The FBI has taken no position on whether it would encourage publications to cooperate with the Unabomber, said Rick Smith, spokesman for the FBI in San Francisco, headquarters of the Unabom task force.

Officials say the Unabomber has killed three people and injured 23 others in 16 bombings since 1978. The latest bomb killed Sacramento timber industry lobbyist Gilbert Murray on April 24.

The New York Times printed an earlier letter from the Unabomber after deletions requested by the FBI, but Guccione said he would not agree to any omissions. In the Times letter, the Unabomber railed against computers and industrial society.

A critique of his ideas & actions.



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