

The Unabomber Speaks

Guccione Responds



October 1995

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The Unabomber Speaks

Mr. Guccione:

This is a message from FC. The FBI calls us “unabom.” You offered to publish our manuscript in Penthouse in exchange for our promise to desist from terrorism, and that is what we are writing to you about.

We have not made any phone calls to you. No communication from FC should be accepted as authentic unless it is verified by means of our secret identifying number, which is known only to the New York Times and the FBI. With the present letter we are sending to the New York Times. That letter carries our identifying number (cut out on your copy) and you can confirm the authenticity of the present letter and accompanying material by comparing your copy of the NY Times letter with the original that we’ve sent to the Times.

We are also enclosing a copy of our manuscript. We are very pleased that you’ve offered to publish our stuff, and we thank you. We aren’t in the habit of reading sex magazines ourselves, but we don’t have anything against those who do read such magazines or those who publish them. However, it will obviously be to our advantage if we can get our stuff published in a “respectable” periodical rather than in Penthouse, because many people do consider sex magazines to be disreputable or worse. Moreover, if we’re not mistaken, Penthouse is basically an entertainment magazine that contains also some serious commentary. In such magazines the serious commentary to some extent serves as part of the entertainment. We are down on the entertainment industry because it is an “opium of the masses” (see paragraphs 147, 156 of our manuscript). So we don’t like the idea of playing footsy with that industry by allowing our writings to be used as entertainment. Therefore, if possible, we’d like to get our stuff published somewhere other than in Penthouse.

We are sending copies of our manuscript to the New York Times and the Washington Post. The NY Times is to have first claim on the right to publish the manuscript (or to arrange for its publication elsewhere), then the Washington Post, and after that Penthouse. If either the New York Times and the Washington Post is willing and able to publish our material (or arrange for its publication elsewhere) reasonably soon, then they will have exclusive rights to the material for a period that will probably be six months (see our letter to NY Times).

If neither the NY Times nor the Washington Post has published the material, or begun to publish it in serial form, or caused it to be published elsewhere, or announced a definite date for its publication, within 3 months from the day the present letter is postmarked, then Penthouse can publish the material, and will have exclusive rights

to it for six months in accord with the conditions stated in our letters to NY Times. BUT, Penthouse must publish the material (or publish the first instalment, if it is to be serialized) within two months after the expiration of the 3 month period we've just mentioned, and publication of the entire manuscript must be completed within about six months after the first instalment appears.

Also, the deal we offer Penthouse will have to be a little different from what we offered the New York Times. If we offer Penthouse the same promise we offered the Times (to desist permanently from terrorism) then the NY Times will have no incentive to find a "respectable" outlet for the manuscript. They may just say, "What the heck, let Penthouse publish it and that will stop the bombings." So to increase our chances of getting our stuff published in some "respectable" periodical we have to offer less in exchange for publication in Penthouse. Therefore, if our manuscript is published in Penthouse, and is not published and widely distributed through "respectable" channels, then we promise to desist permanently from terrorism, in accord with conditions specified in our letters to the NY Times, EXCEPT that we reserve the right to plant one (and only one) bomb, intended to kill, AFTER our manuscript has been published.

Since we are grateful for your offer to publish our manuscript, we are sending you an "exclusive" that you can print in Penthouse if you like.

Prior to June, 1993, when we sent a letter to the New York Times, the FBI led the public to believe that "the unabomber" had never explained his motives or claimed credit for any bombings. Since June, 1993 the FBI has maintained that our letter of that month was the first one from "the unabomber," and they have implied that the significance of the letters "FC" is unknown.

The FBI is probably lying. In December, 1985, shortly after we planted the bomb that killed a computer store owner, we sent a letter to the San Francisco Examiner in which we outlined our motives. This letter revealed that several bombs we'd planted were part of a series, not unrelated events, and it gave enough information about one of the bombs so that the FBI could be sure the letter was authentic. That letter was never mentioned in the Examiner.

Now it is conceivable that the letter was lost in the mail, but that doesn't seem likely, because in late December, 1985 there was an article in the Examiner about the bombings; this was the first news report that gave any indication that our various bombings were part of a series, and the article stated that it had not previously been realised that the bombings were related. So if the FBI is telling the truth, if they never received that letter, then we have to assume that the letter was lost in the mail and that the FBI just happened to discover on its own at that time that the bombings were related. THIS is too much of a coincidence to seem likely. It's more probable that the Examiner did receive the letter and turn it over to the FBI, and that the FBI, for some obscure reason of its own, asked the Examiner to suppress the letter.

We never followed that letter up with any further communications before June, 1993, because we discovered that the type of bomb we were using then was unreliable. It was a kind of pipe bomb that often failed to detonate properly unless made in a form that

was so long and heavy that it might easily arouse suspicion. So we decided that before attempting again to make a public statement we ought to go back to experimenting and develop a type of bomb that would enable us to be adequate terrorists. That we now have such a bomb is indicated by the success of our last four attacks. By the way, contrary to statements made by the FBI, these are not pipe bombs (except in the case of the Mosser bombing).

We give below some excerpts from our December, 1985 letter to the Examiner. We won't give the whole letter, because there is just a chance that the FBI may be telling the truth, that they never received the letter, and in that case, if we gave them the whole letter now some parts of it conceivably might be slightly useful to them in their effort to track us down.

The letters FC stand for "Freedom Club." We now think this name, which we adopted early, is rather inane, but since we've already been marking FC on bomb parts for a long time we may as well retain these letters as our signature.

EXCERPTS FROM 1985 LETTER TO SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER

The bomb that crippled the right arm of a graduate student in electrical engineering and damaged a computer lab at U. of Cal. Berkeley last May was planted by a terrorist group called the Freedom Club. We are also responsible for some earlier bombing attempts; among others, the bomb that injured a professor in the computer science building at U. of Cal., the mail bomb that injured the secretary of computer expert Patrick Fischer at Vanderbilt University 3½ years ago, and the fire bomb planted in the Business School at U. of Utah, which never went off. ...

We have waited until now to announce ourselves because our earlier bombs were embarrassingly ineffectual. The injuries they inflicted were relatively minor. In order to influence people, a terrorist group must show a certain amount of success. When we finally realized that the amount of smokeless powder needed to blow up anyone or anything was too large to be practical, we decided to take a couple of years off to learn something about explosives and develop an effective bomb. ...

... The ends of the pipe were closed with iron plugs secured with iron pins of 5/16 inch diameter. One of the plugs had the letters FC (for Freedom Club) marked on it. ...

We enclose a brief statement partly explaining our aims. We hereby give the San Francisco Examiner permission to print in full any and all of the material contained in this envelope. ...

1. The aim of the Freedom Club is the complete and permanent destruction of modern industrial society in every part of the world. ...
2. The hollowness of the old revolutionary ideologies centering on socialism has become clear. Now and in the future the thrust of rebellion will be against the industrial-technological system itself and not for or against any political ideology that is supposed to govern the administration of that system. All ideologies and

political systems are fakes. They only result in power for special groups who just push the rest of us around. There is only one way to escape from being pushed around, and that is to smash the whole system and get along without it. It is better to be poor and free than to be a slave and get pushed around all your life.

3. No ideology or political system can get around the hard facts of life in industrial society. Because any form of industrial society requires a high level of organization, all decisions have to be made by a small elite of leaders and experts who necessarily wield all the power, regardless of any political fictions that may be maintained. Even if the motives of this elite were completely unselfish, they would still HAVE TO exploit and manipulate us simply to keep the system running. Thus the evil is in the nature of technology itself.
4. Man is a social animal, meant to live in groups. But only in SMALL groups, say up to 100 people, in which all members know one another intimately. Man is not meant to live as an insignificant atom in a vast organization, which is the only way he can live in any form of industrialized society.
5. The Freedom Club is strictly anti-communist, anti-socialist, anti-leftist. ... This does not imply that we are in any sense a right-wing movement. We are apolitical. Politics only distracts attention from the real issue.

Guccione Responds

I am a little miffed and a whole lot disappointed by your recent communication. In your first letter to the New York Times (date) you categorically undertook to "desist from all terrorist activities" if the Times or "some other nationally distributed periodical" agreed to publish your manifesto. Well ... I agreed! I agreed immediately and without reservation. Within 24 hours of your letter appearing in the New York Times, I put out a press release saying that I believed your offer was genuine and that on the basis of that belief, I was prepared to publish you fully and without censorship in the next available issue of Penthouse.

Not everyone in the media agrees with that position. Many think that any attempt to strike a deal with you is journalistically unethical and contrary to the proposition that government, big business and the press do not negotiate with terrorists. I answered those and other accusations in the following manner:

1. You held no individual newspaper or other periodical hostage. You did not insist on publication in any one particular forum failing which you would continue to kill. Had you done so, the New York Times would have turned its back and so would I.
2. I disagreed with the popular belief that you are a serial killer and should be treated like one. I pointed out that serial killers derive the whole of their satisfaction from the act of killing that killing was an end in itself. In your case, I suggested that killing was merely a *means* to the end. Your objectives are much bolder and infinitely more elaborate. You want to change the world! Killing people was your way of attracting attention to a personal philosophical doctrine with vast socio-political change at its center.
3. I further held that anyone who has taken the trouble to write a literate, 37,000 word, philosophical manifesto and who set about killing people to get it published, is most unlikely to destroy the credibility of his thesis by publicly going back on his word. For this reason alone, I do not believe that you would kill again.

In your recent, personal letter to me, however, you have already begun to change the rules. You now say that simple publication in the New York Times or the Washington Post is no longer enough to stay the killings. You are asking for the additional publication of three new statements or "up-dates" annually for three successive years.

A commitment to publish something, sight unseen, well into the future is unlikely win favor at either the Times or the Post. Nor would anyone in our industry blame them!

Furthermore, if both the Times and the Post eventually decline to publish you and the rights fall to Penthouse, you will permit publication in these pages but you will penalize us all by taking one more life. That, you say, is the price of appearing in a somewhat less than "respectable" periodical.

You are wrong! Over the years, Penthouse has won just about every distinguished, journalistic award a magazine could win. It has attacked and exposed elements of every, well entrenched power base in the country from government and religion to big business and organized crime. Our weapons are truth, dedication and an utterly fearless disregard for retaliation. I have been featured on presidential "hit-lists"; I've been the object of retaliatory, I.R.S. audits; I've been bugged, sued, pursued and shot at, but I haven't killed anybody yet!

The demographic mix of our audience is virtually the same as that of the New York Times and the Washington Post, but our total readership is many millions more than the total readership of the Times and the Post *combined*.

Penthouse is one of the biggest and most quoted magazines in the history of our industry. For 25 years it was and continues to be the single, biggest selling magazine in the Pentagon. If it's attention you want, you'd be hard pressed to do better.

To further tempt you from extracting one additional "penalty" should publication fall to me, I propose to offer you one or more unedited pages in Penthouse every single month for an indefinite period of time. Consider it a regular column in which you may continue to proffer your revolutionary philosophy, answer critics and generally interact with the public. Surely this would be preferable to the three annual updates you are requesting from the New York Times, et al.

In return, I am asking you to put an end to all terrorist activities now and forever. I'm still the only friend you have in the media. Don't let my willingness to publish you make fools of us both!

UNABOMBER

Mr. Guccione:

This is a message from FC. The FBI calls us "unabom." You offered to publish our manuscript in Penthouse in exchange for our promise to desist from terrorism; and that is what we are writing to you about.

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We are also enclosing a copy of our manuscript. We are very pleased that you've offered to publish our stuff, and we thank you. We aren't in the habit of reading sex ~~magazines~~ magazines ourselves, but we don't have anything against those who do read such magazines or those who publish them. However, it will obviously ~~be~~ be to our advantage if we can get our stuff published in a "respectable" periodical rather than in Penthouse, because many people do consider sex magazines to be disreputable or worse. Moreover, if we're not mistaken, Penthouse is basically an entertainment magazine that contains also some serious commentary. In such magazines the serious commentary to some extent serves as part of the entertainment. We are down on the entertainment industry because it is an "opium of the masses" (see paragraphs 147, 156 of our manuscript). So we don't like the idea of playing footsy with that industry by allowing our writings to be used as entertainment. Therefore, if possible, we'd like to get our stuff published somewhere other than in Penthouse.

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FC

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2. The hollowness of the old revolutionary ideologies centering on socialism has become clear. Now and in the future the thrust of rebellion will be against the ~~industrial-technological system~~ industrial-technological system itself and not for or against any political ideology ~~that~~ that is supposed to govern the administration of that system. All ideologies and political systems are fakes. They only result in power for special groups who just push the rest of us around. There is only one way to escape from being pushed around, and that is to smash the whole system and get along without it. It is better to be poor and free than to be a slave and get pushed around all your life.

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AN OPEN LETTER TO THE UNABOMBER

I am a little miffed and a whole lot disappointed by your recent communication. In your first letter to the New York Times, (date) you categorically undertook to "desist from all terrorist activities" if the Times or "some other nationally distributed periodical" agreed to publish your manifesto. Well I agreed! I agreed immediately and without reservation. Within 24 hours of your letter appearing in the New York Times, I put out a press release saying that I believed your offer was genuine and that on the basis of that belief, I was prepared to publish you fully and without censorship in the next available issue of Penthouse.

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1. You held no individual newspaper or other periodical hostage. You did not insist on publication in any one particular forum failing which you would continue to kill. Had you done so, the New York Times would have turned it's back and so would I.

2. I disagreed with the popular belief that you are a serial killer and should be treated like one. I pointed out that serial killers derive the whole of their satisfaction from the act of killing that killing was an end in itself. In your case, I suggested that killing was merely a means to the end. Your objectives are much bolder and infinitely more elaborate. You want to change the world! Killing people was your way of attracting attention to a personal philosophical doctrine with vast socio-political change at it's center.

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Unabomber

Page Three

In your recent, personal letter to me, however, you have already begun to change the rules. You now say that simple publication in the New York Times or the Washington Post is no longer enough to stay the killings. You are asking for the additional publication of three new statements or "up-dates" annually for three successive years. A commitment to publish something, sight unseen, well into the future is unlikely to win favor at either the Times or the Post. Nor would anyone in our industry blame them!

Furthermore, if both the Times and the Post eventually decline to publish you and the rights fall to Penthouse, you will permit publication in these pages but you will penalize us all by taking one more life. That, you say, is the price of appearing in a somewhat less than "respectable" periodical.

I cannot accept that, nor can I accept your characterization that Penthouse is strictly an entertainment magazine and, therefore, any serious, non-sex related editorial is read as "entertainment".

Unabomber

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You are wrong! Over the years, Penthouse has won just about every distinguished, journalistic award a magazine could win. It has attacked and exposed elements of every, well entrenched power base in the country from government and religion to big business and organized crime. Our weapons are truth, dedication and an utterly fearless disregard for retaliation. I have been featured on presidential "hit-lists"; I've been the object of retaliatory, I.R.S. audits; I've been bugged, sued, pursued and shot at, but I haven't killed anybody yet!

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A critique of his ideas & actions.



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Penthouse Magazine & Vice News

Ted's letter was received June 29, 1995. Guccione's response was also posted in the New York Times in a paid for full page advertisement. The initial open letter that preceded these two letters was published April 27, 1995, but it's not online and unclear where it might be archived.

www.thetedkarchive.com