



# Perspective

By JAMIE BUCKINGHAM

## Letter To The Editor

Dear Editor Schumann Junior:

I plead guilty. You caught me red-handed stealing material from your paper to go in my new book, "The Last Word." I just didn't think you were smart enough to recognize that some of the chapters had once appeared in the Press-Journal, or I never would have sent you a copy of the book. Then to receive the report that when you saw the package on the desk and realized it was from me that you refused to go near it, saying it would probably explode or soon emit an unbearable stench. And now I have your threatening letter, stating you put the package in a plastic bag and left it in a pasture where it killed all the grass. Well, despite the fact I am guilty of purloining material, I never thought an old friend — a high school and college chum at that — would turn so quickly and start demanding money.

That's right. The whole world needs to know you went to a bald-headed, beady-eyed lawyer who told you to demand a share of my royalties from the book.

The truth of this matter is you are offended because I once addressed you in public as Ebenezer Scrooge. I

now apologize for that and promise never to bring it up again (your stinginess, that is). But the people have the right to know that no one ever buys me things like they do you (paper, pencils, typewriter ribbons) and that it takes me many, many sheets of paper to write my columns because I want them letter perfect without any misspelled words, that I am the one who gets chewed out when I mail my copy and the post office sends it to the Virgin Islands, that I often make midnight trips all the way from my home in Melbourne (riding my moped in the rain) just to meet your silly deadlines, that I never once complained that you erased all the hair off my picture so I would look ridiculous, that no one ever sends me money through the mail like they do Oral Roberts, that once your readers finish with your newspaper they clip my column to paste in their scrapbooks or put in their Bible, and then use the rest of your paper for horrible things like wrapping and wiping. And now, I am being accused of being a thief and you are demanding a share of my royalties.

It seems I have no choice but to give in. My book publisher has put

your name on the contract. He estimates your share of the expenses for the first print run of 100,000 books is \$21,000, plus prorated overhead expenses of 13 cents a book. At my suggestion he is also adding what you should have paid me for writing those columns in the first place which amounts to 82 chapters at \$165 per chapter, plus legal fees for having the contract rewritten by A. Bulance Chaser, attorney-at-law. In cases like this, since your name appears in the Foreword, the publisher says that may keep folks from buying the book so he is asking you to put up an additional \$25,000 to cover expenses in case the book bombs. This means you will receive your first royalty as soon as you send me your check for \$74,760.

Oh, yes, my entire family, including Tiny Tim, is grateful for your generous raise of 21 cents a day. The fact it has been almost five years since my last raise makes this one even more meaningful. And I sincerely hope there is no truth to the rumor that the Rotary Club is planning disciplinary action if you do not give me a decent salary. If so, you're still in trouble.