

Insurance agent says he's getting bad rap on policy

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"What we're saying is that he was fired because he was gay," said David Piontkowsky, Trueman's attorney. Piontkowsky is continuing the suit, which seeks \$5 million in damages, at Trueman's request. Any damages won will go to his estate.

WHILE CAMDEN said he knew

Trueman was ill and had been told he had some form of cancer, it wasn't until testimony in court last September that he learned Trueman was homosexual and suffering from AIDS.

In September, Oakland Circuit Judge John O'Brien denied Trueman's request for an injunction to force Camden to reinstate him as an independent contractor.

Camden said he canceled Trueman's contract because he found out that Trueman did not have a list of clients which he claimed he had when he first signed the contract with the agency.

"He said he had a clientele. He said he had a book of business," Camden said. "In the beginning of April, I checked it out."

J. Michael Malloy, Camden's attorney, has filed a counter claim for the more than \$7,000 that was given to Trueman as salary against his commission in the four months he was under contract with Camden.

In that time, Camden said, Trueman made \$470 in commission.

"Mr. Trueman overdraw a considerable amount of money," Malloy said, about the "draws," given to salesman as salary against their commissions.

Camden also claimed in Oakland Circuit Court in September that Trueman lied about his credentials. Before authorizing the contract's cancellation, Camden checked the salesman's credentials.

THE INSURANCE Institute of America testified the agency owner that they had no record of Trueman's

grades for classes he claimed he had completed, Camden testified.

Unrelated to the lawsuit, but an issue which has drawn a lot of publicity, is the possibility that Camden may collect on a \$100,000 term life insurance policy he took out on Trueman when he began working as an independent contractor for Camden's firm in December 1983.

Piontkowsky questions the propriety of keeping the policy in effect.

"It's a twist to the case," said David Piontkowsky, Trueman's attorney. "We're not claiming it's illegal."

"The question is whether he (Camden) took out the policy before or after he knew Tim was sick," Piontkowsky said. "We think he took it out before-hand."

Camden, who said he would give the money to charity if he collects on the policy, claimed he took out the insurance policy when Trueman began working in December, at least three months before Trueman noticed a bluish lump under his eye.

Piontkowsky acknowledged that such an insurance policy on important employees or contractors, called a "key man" policy, is a "usual business

practice" in firms which would stand large financial loss if the insured died.

"I RECOGNIZED that I would have an investment in this individual contractor (Trueman) for a few years," Camden said. "The only interest that has to appear is when the policy is taken out."

But Piontkowsky said, "Our understanding is that when he found out Tim was very ill, he kept the policy in force."

According to Camden, however, the annual premium on the term policy was paid before he was aware of Trueman's illness.

The "key person" insurance policies have never been raised as an issue before, Malloy said. But now people "are outraged" because of the facts of this case, he added.

Trueman's lawsuit charges seven counts against Camden including breach of contract, discrimination based on handicap and sexual harassment.

In the suit, Trueman claimed he was

not given a 30-day notice as required in the contract, Piontkowsky said. Instead he received a letter asking him not to return to work. He was also offered no pay for the remaining 30 days, Piontkowsky said.

But Camden disclaims those charges. The insurance agency owner said Trueman was offered payment when his contract was terminated.

Malloy, Camden's attorney, refused to comment on the required 30-day cancellation notice.

"THAT'S AN issue I'm not going to comment on," Malloy said.

Trueman's suit also claims intentional infliction of emotional distress because Camden provided the salesman with cancer pamphlets and brochures, according to Piontkowsky.

"We believe that caused Tim mental distress," Piontkowsky added.

Admitting he provided Trueman with pamphlets, Camden said he did so because he was concerned about the salesman's health.

"I'm very sorry about his passing," Camden said.

chamber business

GRAND RAPIDS SENATE RACE — Due to a vacancy in the Senate from the Grand Rapids area there will be a special election in March. The Chamber is accepting donations to its Political Action Committee for support of the pro-business candidate. The announced candidates are Republicans Vernon Ehlers, Henry Fuba, Victor Krause and Democrat Steve Monson. Those wishing to contribute to the Chamber PAC may send a personal check to the Farmington Chamber PAC, 33301 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

FOUNDERS FESTIVAL — The festival committee urges local businesses and shopping centers to make plans for the event this year, July 18-20. Please keep the Chamber office informed of any activities so that they can be publicized.

AFTER-BUSINESS-HOURS MIXER — Scheduled for Thursday, March 28, at the Holiday Inn on Ten Mile. Cost is \$5 per person, \$15 for display table space. (Tables available to Chamber members only). Take this chance to meet your neighbors.

LAS VEGAS NIGHT — The Founders Festival is sponsoring a Las Vegas Party at 7 p.m. Saturday, March 16, at the American Legion Post 190, 29500 W. Nine Mile, Farmington. Tickets are \$7 in advance and \$8.50 at the door, and are available at the Chamber office or the Community Center. Proceeds will support the festival activities for 1985. Businesses wishing to donate door prizes may call the Chamber office at 474-3440.

ANNUAL STATE-OF-THE-CITIES BREAKFAST — This annual event, sponsored by Alexander Hamilton Insurance Co., will be at 8 a.m. Thursday, March 21. There will be reports by the mayors and city managers of Farmington and Farmington Hills. There is no charge for the breakfast, and attendance is limited to Chamber members. For reservations, call 474-3440.

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Circus trip offered to handicapped

The Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Adaptive Recreation program is offering a special event, the Shrine Circus, to all handicapped persons, ages 18 and up, and their families. The performance will be at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, March 16, at the Michigan State Fairgrounds. The \$4 per person fee includes transportation and ticket.

The bus will leave the large parking lot at the Farmington Hills City Hall, 31555 11 Mile, at 8:30 a.m. It will return at approximately 12:45 p.m. The bus is not wheelchair accessible.

Registration deadline is Monday, March 18. For more information, call 474-6115.

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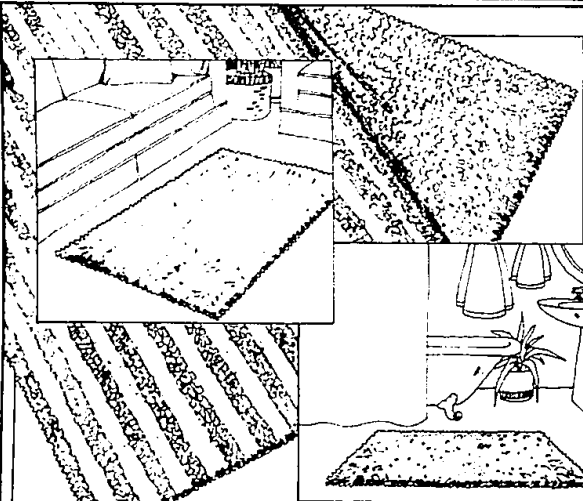
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