

# HEMPSONS

SOLICITORS

C. H. M. BUTCHER  
R. H. JAMES  
J. A. A. WATT  
A. R. L. MIRAMS  
M. A. M. S. LEIGH  
W. S. C. CHEVIS  
C. R. J. DEWHURST  
N. J. C. GILD  
FRANCES A. HARRISON  
J. J. TAYLOR  
ELIZABETH PYGOTT  
J. A. MITCHELL  
R. D. FIELD  
LYNNE M. ASBESS  
GAY E. WILDER  
JANICE C. BARBER

33 HENRIETTA STREET

STRAND

LONDON

WC2E 8NH

TELEPHONE: 01-636 0011

TELEX: 22502

L.D.E. BOX No: 240

TELEGRAMS: 'HEMPSON, LONDON-WC2'

YOUR REFERENCE:

OUR REFERENCE: 424.1201.0854.3

The Editor,  
The Mail on Sunday,  
New Carmelite House,  
Carmelite Street,  
London, EC4Y 0JA.

15th March, 1985.

Dear Sir,

We have been consulted by Dr Peter Jones in connection with the article which appeared in The Mail on Sunday on November 25th, 1984, entitled 'AIDS This scandalous cover-up'

We have advised our client that the article is clearly defamatory; The strap line refers to a 'Tragic Conspiracy Of Silence' and the headline, 'This scandalous cover-up'. The article itself then alleges that 'The medical establishment had locked its doors', and goes on to state that our client's complaint to the Press Council 'started a chain reaction not only in this country but abroad. All this had the effect of silencing the media. Newspapers and T.V. were led to believe that The Mail on Sunday had got it wrong; that the story was alarmist and erroneous'. The article then says that 'The scandalous way in which the facts about AIDS were suppressed in Britain should be a lesson for the future. This emerged to be a story not of a tragic disease but of a battle against the Establishment - a fight for the public's right to know and act in the face of danger. It has taken two deaths to force doctors and Whitehall to act. How could we have allowed a national outcry to be bridled 19 months ago? It is a question I have been asking since May 1983 when Dr Jones made it his personal campaign to silence me and this paper on the subject. His expert advice certainly convinced the Press Council - experts always know best - ..... Even Dr Jones was unable to stem the tide of outrage'. Finally the last paragraph of the article alleges that 'The extraordinary activity of the last seven days has alas come too late for at least two tragic victims'.

The cumulative effect of these passage is to accuse our client of deliberately conspiring to prevent the further publication of facts which he knew to be true, by relying upon his acknowledged expertise. Phrases such as 'scandalous

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cover-up', 'were suppressed' and 'tragic conspiracy' give the impression that our client was guilty of deliberate concealment of the truth, and that, by innuendo, Dr Jones was partly responsible for the avoidable deaths from AIDS of at least two people.

We have advised our client that legal proceedings on his behalf in respect of the said article would be successful. For private reasons, our client has decided not to issue proceedings in this instance. If however he is further defamed in your newspaper, we shall refer to the matters set out above in the subsequent proceedings.

We shall leave it with you as to whether or not, as a matter of good journalistic practice, you give our client some form of assurance or acknowledge our letter, but, to ensure that you receive the same, we are sending this letter by Recorded Delivery.

We are also enclosing a further copy, should you wish to pass this to your reporter.

Yours sincerely,

HEMPSONS

Encls.