



NEWS RELEASE

Cerrell, Winner & Associates

Ambassador Hotel, Suite 68, 3400 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90005 (213) 385-9011

NEW ADDRESS

8170 Beverly Blvd., Suite 101, Los Angeles, California 90048

(213) 653-1225

STATEMENT BY MAYOR JOSEPH L. ALIOTO

The Look article is loaded with lies. I have never been associated with the Mafia or with any underworld activity and I am suing the magazine and its publisher, Gardner Cowles, personally, for \$7.5 million actual damage and \$5 million punitive damage.

If newspaper reports are correct, the forthcoming issue of Look Magazine contains an article captioned "The Web That Links San Francisco's Mayor Alioto with the Mafia -- A Look Report on the Private Joseph Alioto and His Relationship With Organized Crime". So that there will be no question, I categorically deny that I have had any connection, direct or indirect, with Mafia or underworld activities of any nature whatever.

The complaint I have filed charges, among other things:

(1) That the article was published knowing that the inference and innuendos published were wholly false, and with the intent to injure and destroy me and my reputation.

(2) That experienced local journalists have assiduously investigated any conceivable connection between me and the Mafia and independently decided that absolutely no such connection existed.

(3) That former United States Deputy Attorney General Warren Christopher said that organized crime had failed to acquire a foothold in California.

(4) That the San Francisco Police Department, with a national reputation for independence and vigilance, has said there is no Mafia activity in San Francisco.

(5) That Look Magazine had lost \$10 million dollars over the past two years, and to save itself from bankruptcy has adopted a new policy of printing only the most sensational type articles, whether true or not.

There is one point I particularly want to emphasize: the article itself was prepared by two free lance writers and never once was I interviewed, questioned or even contacted by a Look editor or a full-time member of the magazine staff. On three occasions, I wired publisher Gardner Cowles and asked to meet with him or any member of his staff so that any errors, untruths or malicious innuendo could be eliminated or corrected. The first word from Look itself was a telegram from Cowles that there would be no purpose in such a meeting "since the article has been substantially printed and it would be too late to do any editing at this time".

When I have analyzed the Look article itself, I shall issue a paragraph by paragraph, point by point, refutation of every falsehood, every misstatement, and every misguided and incorrect judgement.

I shall request air time to deal not only with the lies in the article but with the larger issue of the ethnic slur against persons of Italian ancestry and, even more importantly, with the bigotry that affects all racial and ethnic groups within the United States.

When I stood for election, I expected that as a public official, I must accept defamatory falsehood if published or said without malice or reckless disregard of the truth. But this does not extend to malicious lies and distortions published for the purpose of character assassination.

Hence, the law suit, and I promise that it will be presented with vigor and dispatch.