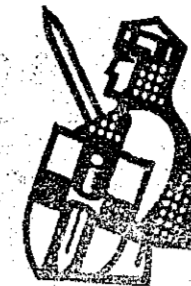


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Miner's amazing accusation against Liberal banker David Holmes

MY LOST POOLS FORTUNE



THE MINER: Terry Gibbs



THE BANKER: David Holmes

AN inquiry has been held by Vernons Pools into the advice given to a major prize-winner by financier David Holmes, friend of Jeremy Thorpe.

Two of the firm's executives reported back to directors at Liverpool yesterday, and a spokesman said: "We are shocked and concerned at what they have discovered."

Vernons' concern centred on the fact that it introduced the winner, a disabled ex-miner, to Mr Holmes as its

EXPRESS EXCLUSIVE

By PAUL HOPKINS Chief Investigative Reporter

then appointed representative on the day he was handed a record summer jackpot of £169,000.

As a result of the advice he subsequently received the ex-miner, 47-year-old Terry Gibbs, claims to have lost more than £100,000 in a carpet business.

The debts

Vernons' investigators were further alarmed by other facts. They learned—**THAT** Mr Holmes suggested that the winner could invest with a man who already had business debts.

THAT among those debts were loans from a Manchester firm of merchant bankers, Arbutnot Chancery Trust, of which Mr Holmes was then a director.

THAT the business man, John Le Mesurier, was a long-standing friend of Mr Holmes.

THAT Mr Holmes on visits to the pools winner's home, allegedly tore up documents relating to the business, saying they were "of no further use."

THAT the pools cheque was lodged with the merchant bankers.

THAT the pools winner had been allowed to incur major losses and assume responsibility for business debts against the same bank of which he had no prior knowledge.

Mr Le Mesurier, who had been running the Pyle Discount Centre carpet warehouse near Bridgend, Mid-Glamorgan, since 1973,

left the business shortly after a newspaper named him as the alleged paymaster in the Norman Scott murder "contract" affair.

Former airline pilot Andrew Newton said he was hired for £5,000 by "a prominent Liberal" to kill Scott, the man who claims to have had a homosexual relationship with former Liberal leader Mr Thorpe.

Mr Holmes, 46, a former honorary deputy treasurer of the Liberal Party and Mr Thorpe's best man at his first marriage, has strongly denied statements to the police naming him as "the prominent Liberal." He has, however, admitted paying £2,500 to Scott in return for documents.

Refusal

Yesterday the Daily Express requested an interview with Mr Holmes in the presence of his London solicitors, D. J. Freeman, in order to seek an explanation for the claims made by Mr Gibbs. The solicitor said: "Mr Holmes, on advice, is not prepared to answer questions."

Pools winner Mr Gibbs, who lives at Blackmill, near Bridgend, said: "I didn't want all this to come out. You can see I wasn't much of a business man."

But, Mr Gibbs added: "Now I am in control of the business and it is beginning to look better. I'm beginning to enjoy it."

The full story:
Centre Pages

Kept alive —to have a baby

SEE PAGE 2



WHITEHALL ROCKED BY £200m SCANDAL: SEE PAGES 6 AND 7