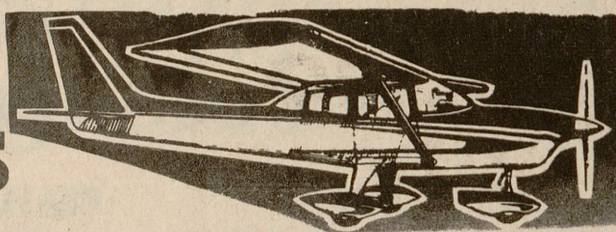


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Right on target

Chris Miller, 6, watches as his older brother, Tommy, 9, practices his archery. Tommy has about a year's experience at the sport. Their father is a graduate student in accounting at Texas A&M.

Photo by Sarah Co...

**Fast-talker bilks merchants
from Dallas out of \$100,000**

DALLAS (AP) — When big-talking Michael Morris came to town, appearing to have all the accoutrements of a high-rolling businessman, leasing agents and merchants took him at his word.

Now they are holding the bag for at least \$100,000 and wondering how they could have been fooled.

Morris was able to lease, furnish and equip eight suites of offices across the city, rent a \$2,500-a-month house with a pool without even producing a security deposit and run up limousine bills of up to \$500 a day for two months, all by fast talking.

Reagan Martin, the attorney for and father of Billy Martin, who says Morris owes him almost \$15,000 for limousine service, said, "In a market where we would all like to have someone come in and lease up space and conduct legitimate business, people are willing to listen and hear things they want to be true."

Morris had the name MacAndrews & Forbes in gold letters on the entrance of his rented office on the 10th floor of the Plaza of the Americas.

MacAndrews & Forbes is the billion-dollar parent corporation of such companies as Revlon Cosmetics, Max Factor, Technicolor and Tri-Star Pictures, and employees said Morris indicated he was associated with the big firm.

But his illusions have caught up with him in the past two weeks. MacAndrews & Forbes blocked him from using its name through a temporary restraining order issued Aug. 27 in federal court. Morris' attorney

later agreed to a preliminary injunction.

By Monday, the building's leasing management terminated his leases and changed the locks.

The U.S. Postal Inspection Service has launched an investigation, the *Dallas Times Herald* reported.

Morris, who is not listed in the Dallas telephone directory, did not return repeated phone calls or re-

"In a market where we would all like to have someone come in and lease up space and conduct legitimate business, people are willing to listen and hear things they want to be true."

— Reagan Martin, attorney

spond to a telegram sent by the newspaper.

In a deposition with attorneys two weeks ago, Morris stated his name as Michael Jeffrey Morris and said he was born in Oklahoma.

He pleaded the Fifth Amendment to all other questions, including his age.

Before suspicions about Morris were aroused he fooled a lot of people, including those he hired to run his business, the nature of which he never specified.

Pam Walker, Morris' secretary, began to suspect something when her paycheck drawn on Commerce Bank was stamped: "Account Closed."

Then, when the office received a barrage of phone calls from a dozen angry creditors, her suspicions about her fast-talking were confirmed.

William Ravkind, Morris' attorney, contends trouble is stirred up by a few small creditors get their money.

"I don't know what everybody upset about," Ravkind said, "but that there was nothing to it that the MacAndrews & Forbes Dallas was related to the New firm."

Ravkind also said Morris' are minor, noting, "It's as if I've ever seen a business owe."

Morris was skilled in putting his creditors, acting insulted, asked to provide bank references.

When Valerie Freeman, owner of a temporary service, tried unsuccessfully to get a credit reference, said Morris became enraged.

"He said he was very prominent and would see to it that everybody in town knew about this we were playing," Freeman said. "He said, 'How do you think get a lease here (in the Plaza) didn't have good credit?'"

Morris also held off creditors threatening to take his business where.

Martin said, "It's a rather elaborate scam. But four years ago, Dallas this could have been a story."

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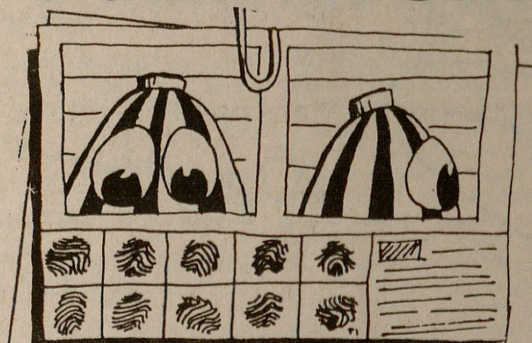
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