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Spy writer West left out in the cold...



FAMOUSLY described by a judge as 'one of the most dishonest witnesses I have ever seen', former Tory MP and author Rupert Allason had better make the most of the luxuries available on his current sojourn, cruising the Aleutian islands between Alaska and Russia in the Northern Pacific.

For the writ-happy Downside-educated Allason, better-known as spy writer Nigel West, faces losing his mews house in central London after he pursued one legal action too many.

Allason, 59, the former MP for Torbay, sued publishers Random House ten years ago for breach of copyright over their book *The Enigma Spy*, about Soviet agent John Cairncross, the alleged Fifth Man in the Cambridge spy ring.

Not only did he lose the case, but High Court judge Mr Justice Laddie told him he had told 'untruth after untruth'.

The publishers have been pursuing him ever since for their legal costs of nearly £300,000 and have now applied to take possession of his tiny home in Belgravia, worth around £750,000.

The case follows a whole series of legal actions during which the perma-tanned and louche Allason became a near-permanent fixture of the Royal Courts of Justice, issuing writs. He once even sued the BBC's *Have I Got News For You* team after it said

□ MICHAEL Winner and his bride-to-be Geraldine, who wed next week, may get more than they bargained for when they arrive for their honeymoon at the glamorous Hotel Splendido on the Italian Riviera. *Orient-Express* hotels boss Maurizio Saccant, who has had the odd tiff with Winner over his restaurant reviews — Michael described him as 'hot-blooded and silly' — is planning a surprise. Staff expect the enthusiastic jazz guitarist to serenade the newlyweds with a Beatles medley. Indeed, he has been rehearsing quite hard, I am told. Perhaps his first number should be *All You Need Is Love*.

his fondness for pursuing libel actions 'meant there are excellent legal reasons for not referring to him as a conniving little s***'. He lost.

In the latest action in which lawyer Stephen Shotnes is acting for Random House, Allason claimed that the Belgravia property did not belong to him as it was in trust for his children — his son, online entrepreneur Tom, 31, and 24-year-old daughter Alex.

But the judge in this latest hearing, Mr Justice David Richards, said he was satisfied Allason's evidence was untrue and that he had 'concocted' the purported declaration of trust.

Divorced in 1996 from his heiress wife Nicole who lives in Bermuda, friends now wonder where Allason, who has a new woman in his life, will end up living next.

Bright fuchsia: Lady Mary