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Magazine Publishers of America
810 Seventh Avenue, 24th Floor
New York, NY 10019
Attn: Nina Link, President

March 23, 2004

Dear Ms. Link:

I am writing this letter on behalf of the many individuals, including myself that have been victimized by the Magazine clearinghouse/traveling sales crew industry.

I would advise you, as the President of the M. P. A. to review the following requirements:

* Discontinue the use of magazine clearinghouses that use door-to-door sales crews to sell magazines

These magazine sales crews historically and consistently have used impressionable teenagers and young adults to sell magazines door- to-door. The young people are mandated to sell a specific amount of magazines and then placed under a tremendous amount of duress, including physical and mental abuse in order to reach imposed sales quotas.

I will not attempt to supply you with the current data that show the number of individuals that have been killed or physically injured when working under horrendous conditions while traveling with the sales crews. I will leave that startling statistic to the Parents of the children who have died or have been injured.

The aforementioned traveling sales crews also use convicted felons of violent crime to work on the crews. Again, I will not inundate you with data supporting the number of deaths and injuries that have occurred at the hands of these crews. It is my guess that you probably are aware of the statistics by now.

About two years ago, a 21-year-old magazine salesperson working for American Community Services, Inc (a magazine clearinghouse) was dropped off in a very nice upper middle class neighborhood. He was part of a "crew" working in Knoxville, TN. This young man had a lengthy criminal record that included armed robbery and credit card fraud to name just two of his convictions. He was recruited from a halfway house in New York City and transported by van to Knoxville, TN. The young man knocked on the door of my 67-year-old widowed mother. When he saw that the door was open, he entered and when surprised by my mother, he proceeded to beat, rape her multiple times and then stab her in the throat with a kitchen carving knife with such force that he pinned her to the floor. This is how I found my mother.

I hold the magazine clearinghouse directly responsible for placing this young man in my mother's home. I hold the M.P.A. responsible for allowing these companies to represent the Publishers. I find it unconscionable that anyone with such a past would be hired and then allowed to enter unsuspecting individual's homes. I cannot imagine that your association would condone or accept such a practice!

Keeping in mind, that my story is simply one of many. That is why it is imperative that some sort of resolution occur.

The Magazine Publishers of America must stop the use of magazine clearinghouses and the use of door-to-door sales crews.

Page two

With the advent of the Internet and other services available, there is really no reason to utilize these types of sales tactics.

The Magazine Publishers of America cannot make this issue go away. By not addressing the problem, you, (the M.P.A.) are sanctioning the business practices of the clearinghouses and sales crews. This is reprehensible! If you choose to do nothing, I believe that the M.P.A. is as much at fault as the clearinghouses and the crews themselves. Going about your daily business, knowing that murder, rape and abuse occur regularly within this business and then choosing to do nothing is in my opinion, disgraceful!

The sales crews and clearinghouses are viewed as representatives of the magazines that they sell. Whether you are willing to admit that or not. Am I to assume that the Publishers are accepting of the fact that murderers, rapists and the like are their chosen representatives?

I urge you to consider this letter and the many other letters that you will receive from the many victims of the traveling sales crew industry.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Noffsinger
