

The Insider

Jack Ruby Stays Dead A Retraction to Make Your Eyes Roll: We Bite the Bullet and It Explodes



In our February 6 issue we ran an item recounting reports of the contents of Edward Jay Epstein's awaited assassination book, *Legend: The Secret World of Lee Harvey Oswald*. We called it "A Story to Make Your Eyes Roll"—but it seems that our eyes

are the ones rolling from the news that we were dead wrong on the item.

Well, it's not our first incorrect item—but we did try awfully hard not to do it. We checked our original information (our cold-warrior friends ask whether it was Moscow disinformation—this seems to be more Manhattan misinformation) with enough people. We talked to Epstein himself; Epstein's Reader's Digest Press editor; a close Epstein friend and fellow assassination researcher; a key source for the book, James Angleton, the former CIA chief of counter intelligence; an editor at a paperback publisher who claimed to have read parts of the manuscript. We went as well to several other peripheral sources. The problem was: Epstein declared an "information embargo" when we spoke to him; his editor confirmed "elements of truth" in what we had; everybody else knew a lot less than we thought they did. And then (J-School students beware!), in the last minute editing, we cut much of our own whimsical hedging, making a fanciful bit of speculation look far too much like News. Our apologies to Mr. Epstein. This item has aged us so that we have crow's feet to match our crow to eat. •