

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. •

Holding Banner

Brown Sparks Atomic Storm In Own Party Over Anti-Nukism

Like some radio-serial queen, Jerry Brown seems to be caught in a life-or-death bind at the end of each week. Suddenly it's the pro- and anti-nuke battle that gives the illusion of coming to a head over Jerry's dead body.

At issue is the State Energy Commission's recent stand to oppose San Diego Gas and Electric's proposed \$3 billion Sun Desert nuclear power plant to be located in the arid

wasteland 200 miles east of San Diego. All of the Commission members are Brown appointees and disciples. The plant is deeply desired by business, labor and their political allies in both parties.

Already, the state senate, including a majority of that body's Democrats, has passed legislation designed to override the commission's actions. It's a hot fight. So angry are some top Democrats that an-



Liz and Dinitz: Goin' home

Dinitz and Bulk of Israeli Diplomatic Corps to be Recalled

Israel's American diplomatic corps is about to undergo major upheaval, with Ambassador to Washington Simcha Dinitz, UN Ambassador Chaim Herzog and New York Consul-General Uri Ben-Ari all reportedly to be recalled soon—perhaps before the summer.

The prime mover behind this purge-ish maneuver is not, as some suspected, Prime Minister Menachem Begin (who to the surprise of many has decided to make no serious changes until the negotiations with Egypt reach a stable plateau) but his Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan. Dayan sent Foreign Ministry Director-General Ephraim Evron, the conservative conduit who is the likely successor to Dinitz, to the United States a

couple of weeks back to bring the bad news to the local Israeli diplomats. The word is that Evron told Herzog that not only was he due to be recalled, but that Israel's entire UN operation would be severely curtailed; Dayan considers it oversized, redundant and ineffective. (Israel has more than 20 accredited diplomats with its UN operation.)

As for Ben Ari, Dayan felt he was running a second American embassy out of New York—and the two are known to be old foes from the days when both served as high-ranking officers in the Israeli Army. As for Dinitz, his shiny tenure on the Washington social scene whose high-stepping tendencies never delighted leaders at home, will be coming to a lamented end.

gry rumblings are being heard from within Brown's own party for his ouster, and one state senator will barnstorm California denouncing the nuclear brown-out.

If the senate and state assembly join in the atomic attack, Brown will probably

veto the efforts. The Brown policy now involves more Ecotopian, autonomous energy acquisitions resembling the current deal in which the California nation has worked out purchases with President Torrijos for Mexican gas and oil reserves. —Joel Kotkin