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INTELLIGENCER

BY JEANNETTE WALLS

MONEY MATTERS...A SRI SPREE...CAN YOU SAY 'OBSEQUIOUS'?...THE BLAME GAME



FORBES MAGAZINE

FORBES TAKES FLAK FROM ITS OWN SHOT

Is someone trying to discredit the writers of the *Forbes* exposé on Donald Trump?

In May, senior editor Richard Stern and "consultant" John Connolly wrote a cover story reassessing the fortune of the developer at \$500 million, down from \$1.7 billion. A month later, *Forbes* dismissed Connolly when it was disclosed that he had been barred from the securities business for violating industry laws.

The former New York City police officer is also under federal investigation in New Jersey to determine if he used outdated police credentials to obtain confidential documents. Connolly denies the charge.

Now Stern's role is being looked at as well. J. R. True, who helped reveal Connolly's past in his newsletter, *Wall Street Tales*, questions Stern's relationship to short-sellers—who have an interest in driving down stock prices.

True, who says his newsletter was started last year, denies he has an ax to grind and also laughs off charges that his



SRI CHINMOY, NELSON MANDELA

name is a pseudonym and that he has ties to Trump: "What we print is true."

A *Forbes* spokesman calls the story "scurrilous and libelous. We have no reason to believe any of this is true. We're not going to say much beyond that."

MIKHAIL, MANDELA MET WITH GURU

Not many gurus can say they've had private audiences with both Mikhail Gorbachev and Nelson Mandela. New Yorker Sri Chinmoy, who leads weekly meditation sessions for delegates at the United Nations, met with the Soviet president in May. Last month, Winnie Mandela contacted the spiritual leader and invited him to talk with her husband, African National Congress deputy president Nelson Mandela, after his speech to the U.N. General Assembly. Chinmoy, who claims to have about 2,000 followers, is perhaps best known for sponsoring the "Oneness Home Peace Run," in which teams of citizens carry a torch from country to country.

"Mrs. Mandela had asked one of our staffers at Ted Koppel's town meeting if Sri Chinmoy was available," says Nishtha Baum, a Chinmoy spokeswoman. "She had read



TINA BROWN



ALEX DILORENZO III

HONEY-TONGUED TINA DRIPS ALL OVER OVITZ

How far does *Vanity Fair* go to get an interview with an elusive celebrity? If necessary, editor-in-chief Tina Brown grovels.

In a December 1988 letter to the powerful agent Michael Ovitz—which will appear in the August *Spy*—Brown writes, "I was surprised to hear . . . that you are on the point of 'breaking your silence to the press in *Premiere*,' . . . [which] would be rather like Marlon Brando choosing *Falcon Crest* as a vehicle for a comeback." Brown praises Ovitz's "aura of leadership" and "gifted sense of talent, material, timing and taste, plus, of course, extraordinary business acumen," and compares Ovitz to the legendary Irving Thalberg. Brown explains that she's too busy to do the profile herself but suggests writer Jesse Kornbluth, who is "knowledgeably well disposed toward" Ovitz's Creative Artists Agency. She assures him she will be "watching over [the article] and shaping it every step of the way." Ovitz didn't agree to the interview. Brown could not be reached.

his book *Inner and Outer Peace* and wanted her husband to meet him."

HAPPY LAND LORD MAY SUE THE CITY

Alex DiLorenzo III, who owns the site of the Happy Land Social Club, claims the city is to blame for the blaze that killed 87 people in March, says a source. Lawyers for the much-maligned landlord are looking into filing a suit against the city—saying that closing the violation-ridden Bronx nightclub was the responsibility of New York officials. The lawyer handling the case for DiLorenzo did not return calls, and it

could not be determined what damages he would seek.

"His lawyers are contending that DiLorenzo would have had great difficulty closing the club even if he tried," says the source. "His only recourse would have been eviction proceedings, which can take years. The city could have come in and closed it down in a snap. So all this bad publicity and loss of property have been the city's fault."

RUDOLF SLOW TO PAY FOR QUICK!?

Nightlife impresario Rudolf, who has been criticized for ex-