

W Post 1/3/92
The Bushes continue their adventures Down Under. Barbara Bush watched sheep getting shorn yesterday in Canberra, Australia, patting one and calling it "sweetheart." "I think he ought to talk to you," the First Lady told the sheep, referring to Matthew O'Neil, property manager of the Glenloch sheep station. O'Neil had greeted the president's wife with "G'day, howy'r goin'?" She replied, "Great, thanks."

Besides discussing U.S. trade policy yesterday, President Bush weighed in on the movie "JFK." At a news conference in Canberra, Bush was asked about the controversial Oliver Stone work. "I don't know much about the movie. I haven't seen it, and there's all kinds of conspiratorial theories floating around on everything," he said. "Elvis Presley is rumored to be alive and well someplace, and I can't say that somebody won't go out and make a movie about that," he continued, adding, "I have seen no evidence that has given me any reason to believe the Warren Commission was wrong."

Earlier in the day, on his way to meetings at Parliament House, Bush surprised protesters with an ambiguous hand gesture when he smiled from his limousine and waved the V-for-victory sign at them—with the back of his hand facing out. To Australians, that's a decidedly nasty gesture. On a boat ride in Sydney Harbor Wednesday, Bush had expressed pleasure at being received so cordially on his first state visit to Australia, saying lightly, "I'm a man who knows every hand gesture you've ever seen." He added, "I haven't learned a new one since I've been here."

W Post Weekend 1/3/92
JFK (R) — If the first order of business in Oliver Stone's movie about the Kennedy assassination is entertainment, then he has succeeded. This is a riveting marriage of fact and fiction, hypothesis and empirical proof in the edge-of-the-seat trappings of a conspiracy thriller. As for the scenario—in which Kevin Costner (playing real-life New Orleans district attorney Jim Garrison) implicates the entire military-industrial complex, the intelligence agencies, not to mention a fictional "General Y" at the Pentagon—it's a surrealistic convoluted. Nevertheless, the director (reflecting 30 years of conspiracy theories and research by others) blows more than a few holes in the official Warren Commission report. Employing amateur cameraman Abraham Zapruder's eerie recording of the real assassination, he pursues the logical (or illogical) trail. How many bullets were shot? Was there a shot from the grassy knoll? Why was Oswald questioned alone? On the downside, Costner makes a dull center of the movie. But everyone around him is strong, including Joe Pesci, Tommy Lee Jones and Gary Oldman (as Oswald). Whatever your conclusions about the truth of the matter, this three-hour movie is almost always absorbing to watch. Area theaters.