

# Peter Tory

ON FRIDAY

## Psst! A JFK secret couldn't have been



FATED... JFK, whose murder still causes great debate, and wife Jackie

**T**HERE has been much anguished and confused debate about Oliver Stone's film JFK. The matter, surely, can be settled with some simplicity.

The single catastrophic flaw of the picture, a movie which sets out to propose that the President was the victim of a widely organized coup d'etat, is the suggestion that the thousands of people involved in such an enterprise could have kept what would have been the 20th Century's most devastating secret.

*Gossip, it might be argued, is the most powerfully driven and uncontrollable form of human intercourse apart from sex.*

Here we have a notion that admirals, generals, politicians, CIA directors, munitions manufacturers, surgeons, coroners, airline pilots, undertakers, policemen, grassy knoll park keepers, Mafiosi, exiled Cuban thugs and homosexuals — the most gossipy of the lot, surely — have managed to keep mum, even in moments of stress, drunkenness,

# that kept

sexual abandon or on their deathbeds, for 30 years.

One loose word. Two perhaps. Three or four. And the world would have known within the day, or even within the hour.

One 'pssst' and the cat would have been out of the bag. But all, in this regard, has been silence. Not a stir.

*Oliver Stone's thesis is plainly preposterous.*

Still, the debate can never be left there. It never will, indeed. In my cinema, in which there was a predominantly young audience comprising those who had hardly ever considered the issue, there was a gasp like a mighty rush of wind when the fatal bullet struck Kennedy's head.

Many, of course, had not previously seen the flickering cine film, taken by amateur movie-maker Zapruder, where JFK appears to have been hit from the front — not from the direction of Oswald's rifle, to the rear — by a blow from an invisible sledgehammer.

**H**ERE was the terrifying moment shown in close-up on a screen two-storey's high. This is the only piece of visual evidence, incontrovertible, which has ever been available to the public.

The Daily Telegraph this week, in an editorial, repeated the contention by ballistics authorities that 'such a movement is the neuromuscular reaction to sudden destruction of the brain's nerve cells'.

In other words the muscles, despite the impact from behind of a solid piece of lead travelling at twice the speed of sound, are able to kick the head back with an equal and opposite force.

If those ballistics experts are right then we haven't, as mere observers in our billions, got very much to go on.

If they are wrong — as many believe they are — then Lee Harvey Oswald must have had a chum. Of sorts. At the very least.

*Not quite so grandly dramatic. But what a rather more sensible and very much more credible movie that might well have made.*