

RICHARD JOHNSON



Wash. Post casts stones at 'JFK' flick

OLIVER STONE IS battling The Washington Post over the creditability of his film-in-progress, "JFK."

The director of "Platoon," "Wall Street," "Born on the Fourth of July" and "The Doors" feels he was unfairly attacked two Sundays ago in a 3,600-word piece by national security correspondent George Lardner Jr.

The article was headlined "Dallas in Wonderland: How Oliver Stone's Version of the Kennedy Assassination Exploits the Edge of Paranoia." The piece exposed what Lardner sees as serious departures from reality in the first draft of the screenplay.

The film, which blames "a shadow government consisting of corrupt men at the highest levels of the Pentagon, the intelligence establishment, and the giant multinational corporations," stars Kevin Costner as crusading New Orleans district attorney Jim Garrison, who tracked down several conspiracy leads in the late 60s.

Lardner quotes Stone during the filming of the assassination scene, as barking into a walkie-talkie: "I said, 'All five shots.' All right. Everybody in position now. Ready to fire." Lardner wonders: "Five shots? Is this the Kennedy assassination or 'The Charge of the Light Brigade?'"

Stone called executive editor Ben Bradlee and wrote a point-by-point rebuttal.

"There is no feud between Oliver Stone and Ben Bradlee," Stone's publicist told me. "They had a fabulous conversation. Oliver said, 'I'd like to write a response.' Bradlee replied, 'That's fair. Send it to me personally.'" Stone's letter arrived late last



Oliver Stone
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Wednesday. But Lardner, after reading it, claimed: "It's full of errors." **Bo Jones**, the head of The Post's legal department, was said to be advising Bradlee.

Sources report it's unlikely that The Washington Post, with a history of standing behind its reporters, will run Stone's rebuttal. Which means there will be bad feelings.

"There might be a problem if they refuse to print it," Stone's publicist said ominously. "We won't just leave it there."
