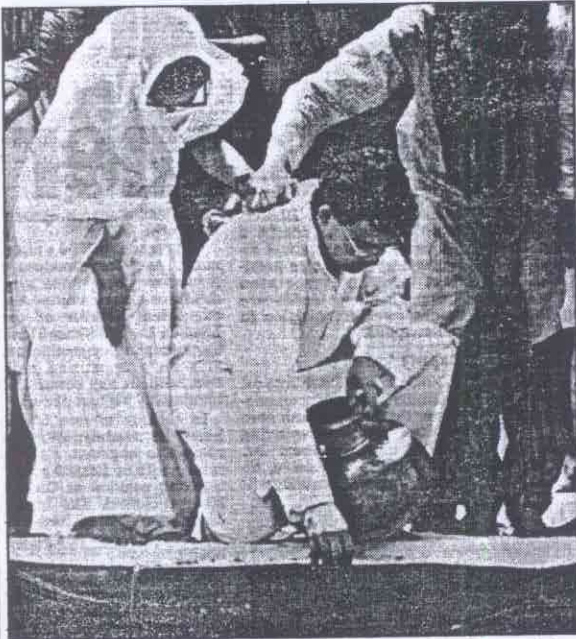


AROUND THE WORLD



FINAL GOODBYE: Rahul Gandhi empties ashes of his father, Rajiv, into sacred river as his mother, Sonia (l.), and sister, Priyanka, hold hands.

Son scatters Gandhi's ashes into sacred water, ending rites

INDIA — Rahul Gandhi scattered his father's ashes in the sacred waters of the Ganges and Jamuna rivers yesterday, finalizing Hindu funeral rites for the former prime minister.

Rahul, 20, dressed in the white color of mourning, emptied a copper urn containing the remains of his father into the muddy brown water at Allahabad. His mother Sonia sobbed and wiped tears with the end of her white sari, while her daughter Priyanka, 21, comforted her.

Hindus believe the ritual immersion of the ashes in the waters they consider sacred will assure the deceased a place in heaven until his soul is reborn.

Completing the rites for Rajiv Gandhi, assassinated May 21 by a bomb in southeastern India, allows his leaderless Congress Party to resume the search for his political heir.

Fear looting at crash site

THAILAND — Officials yesterday said looting at the crash site could hamper the investigation into whether it was a bomb that caused an Austrian airliner to explode and crash in the jungle with 223 people aboard Sunday.

In one instance, when police ordered a group of looters to drop what they were carrying in one spot — hopelessly mixing parts from different sections of the airplane.

Lithuania raps 'black berets'

SOVIET UNION — The Lithuanian parliament yesterday declared that the basing of Soviet "black beret" troops in the republic

was illegal, and it described recent raids by the Soviet forces on border posts as criminal acts.

The Supreme Council adopted a resolution branding the Soviet Interior Ministry troops outlaws and calling for their punishment under Lithuanian law, according to spokeswoman Rita Dapkus.

Premier wins test

YUGOSLAVIA — The federal parliament yesterday rejected a no-confidence motion against Premier Ante Markovic, whose attempts at market reform have angered Serbian leaders.

The Socialist government of Serbia, Yugoslavia's largest republic, has long tried

to unseat Markovic, whose program of economic reform and mediation among the country's fractious states attracts widespread Western support.

Italy to get ship hijacker
GREECE — An appeals council in Athens yesterday granted Italy's request to extradite a Palestinian convicted in absentia and sentenced to life in prison in the 1985 hijacking of the Achille Lauro.

The three-member panel, a special judicial body that deals with extraditions, ruled in favor of the Italian extradition request for Abdulrahim Khaled. The 56-year-old Khaled has 24 hours to appeal the decision to the Supreme Court.

They have yet to identify the young woman who detonated explosives attached to her waist, killing Gandhi and 16 other people.

Nor have they made progress in finding any accomplices. "Our work is going to carry on a long time," said one officer.

The Associated Press
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RICHARD JOHNSON



Wash. Post casts stones at 'JFK' flick

OLIVER STONE IS battling The Washington Post over the credibility 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
Keep Posted on the latest feud.

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."

It's a pretty sad statement on the quality of the latest crop of films the way the critics are raving about "Thelma & Louise."

Susan Sarandon and Geena Davis give terrific performances, but this female buddy movie is ridiculous. It jus-



Geena Davis
She's terrific; movie's ridiculous.

tifies armed robbery, manslaughter and chronic drunken-driving as exercises in consciousness-raising. It glorifies suicide. And it is so degrading to men, with pathetic stereotypes of testosterone-crazed behavior, that Loews Theaters should ban it immediately for the same twisted reasons the chain refused to show Andrew Dice Clay's "Dice Rules."

This is a women's film, a "Terms of Endearment"-type tearjerker, cynically disguised as a "Lethal Weapon," "Tango & Cash" action shoot-'em-up. Fans of both genres, and fans of director Ridley Scott's previous masterpieces, "Blade Runner" and "Alien," will be sorely disappointed. Still, from what I hear, it's a lot better than "Hudson Hawk."

The only thing the Japanese want from us is our music, movies, paintings, real estate, fashions and ... nightclubs. They'll be getting a TV show that originates from the legendary reincarnated Danceteria.

John Argento, owner of Danceteria, which introduced Madonna in one of its incarnations, has inked a development deal with Rebo Studio in New York to film the show from the club. Shot in high-definition TV, which is very big in Japan, the program will showcase new talent, fashions and personalities. Argento wants to "double-market" the show, selling it to both a U.S. and a Japanese network.

"It will probably be a bit underground for the American networks," said Argento. "But the Japanese are already interested. They'll buy anything about New York."

Sen. Ted Kennedy has some loyal supporters at Irish America magazine. Editor Patricia Harty introduced a cover story on Ted by writing: "If you're looking for more sleaze on the Kennedys in this month's issue, I'm sorry to disappoint you. There isn't any. I think we have all had enough."

The story's author, Michael Scanlon, reports: "The 'real' story of what happened that Friday night in Palm Beach changes more often than the weather in Connemara. But one set of facts has become more clear with each passing day as they relate to Sen. Kennedy. He went out on a weekend night for some drinks with his son and nephew. He came home, had a nightcap, and he went to sleep. Once you cut out all the hype and sensationalism, that is the extent of his actions."