

# Stone's 'JFK' a step in right direction



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The film comes right on schedule. It is more than 25 years later and so, the timing is right for the blockbuster movie that goes deeper and

his say. He didn't even get close to a courtroom. He was gunned down while in the custody of the police. So in the killing of President Kennedy, we still don't know.

Now comes the film that has been long awaited. It is called "JFK," which is name enough, and it was made by Oliver Stone. In his eyes, there is a direct line between the killing of Kennedy and his winding up less than 10 years later on the battlefields of Vietnam. Did Oswald do it? The film says no. Was there a conspiracy? The film says it wasn't just a conspiracy; it was a coup that took place in Dallas.

The way things are, a lot of time has to pass to get at the truth. When Kennedy was killed, nothing was more important than convincing Americans that no conspiracy was involved. The official finding was that one man, Lee Harvey Oswald, shot and killed Kennedy. And officially, Oswald did that acting alone.

The official story says that Oswald sat at an open window in the building where he worked and, with rifle in hand, waited for Kennedy's motorcade. And when the President was at the precise spot, he squeezed off three perfect shots from a cheap rifle he had gotten through a mail order house. And in the official story, that was it.

The movie is told largely through the one investigation of the assassination that made it to the courtroom. This was no official doing, this was the work of Jim Garrison, who was then district attorney in New Orleans. As the years have stacked up, the memory of Garrison has grown dim. But what does not fade is the way Garrison got portrayed when word of his investigation got out. He was made out to be a nut and a publicity seeker. Back then, Garrison had a credibility problem. Academy Award winning actor Kevin Costner plays District Attorney Garrison in the film, portraying him as being anything but crazy. Costner is a model of the "All-American boy" and he hands that credibility to Garrison. The re-



The JFK story — it's time for truth

sult is a film about the assassination that is so compelling that if nothing else, it forever destroys the notion that Lee Harvey Oswald by himself killed President Kennedy.

But the movie is not without flaws. It is set up in a way that invites legitimate criticism, because it gives weight to even uncorroborated stories. It pretends that there are no loose ends, and it accuses people in

high places, such as former President Johnson, without supporting evidence.

However, Oliver Stone's film is not without merit, and as I watched his film, it brought to mind the killing I was to witness some six years later in Memphis, the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. In the killing of King, the official story said there was no conspiracy, that James Earl Ray, who was acting alone, had shot and killed King. As Costner (Garrison) argued, much of what witnesses to the Kennedy killing had seen was discounted. It was that way in Memphis, too. When King was killed, witnesses told of the shot being fired by a man crouched in the bushes, across from the motel where King stood on a balcony. The official story said that Ray fired the shot from the bathroom window of a flophouse, behind the bushes, and that once he had killed King, Ray went back to his room, took the rifle he used and a lot of other damning evidence, wrapped it all in a sheet and dropped that on the sidewalk as he fled. What those of us who were there had seen was ignored.

The film "JFK" does not have all the answers. But it does make a shambles of the official story. With these assassinations that have changed our lives and changed the country, we need the truth. And 25 years of waiting is long enough.