

DAILY VARIETY

MONDAY, JANUARY 27, 1992

Warners grabs flap over 'JFK' by the lapels

BY CHARLES FLEMING

At Hollywood Boulevard's glitzy new GCC Galaxy theater complex, concession stand employees and ticket sellers are wearing buttons that read "Free the Files," an indication both of "JFK" director Oliver Stone's commitment to urging the government to release confidential data regarding President Kennedy's assassination, and of Warner Bros.' commitment to making the most of a good controversy.

Warner Bros. officials declined comment, but sources say the studio has supplied many thousands of the buttons to theaters in the top 10-15 U.S. markets.

The studio additionally took out "Free the Files" college newspaper advertisements.

WB also has been playing politics. The studio is using as consultant on the campaign Frank Mankiewicz, the former National Public Radio president who was once press secretary to Robert Kennedy and campaign manager to George McGovern.

D.C. critic Dowell ankles after 'JFK' review is spiked

WASHINGTON—Count D.C. film critic Pat Dowell as the latest casualty in the ongoing "JFK" controversy.

Dowell recently ankleed as critic for Washingtonian magazine when editor Jack Limpert spiked a favorable review of the Oliver Stone pic.

Limpert said Friday he took the action because he believes "JFK" was a "crackpot movie" that unfairly portrays how Washington operates.

Limpert said he has disagreed with Dowell's reviews in the past but has never before refused to run her criticism. The "JFK" review was pulled because Dowell "was making a political statement."

The rejected Dowell review labeled "JFK" a "brilliantly crafted indictment of history as an official story. Is it the truth? Stone says you be the judge."

Dowell will continue to review films for WETA-FM.