

Stone: Valenti 'does not speak for us' on labels

By David Kelly

WASHINGTON — Saying that "the First Amendment also applies to directors," Oliver Stone criticized Jack Valenti and his MPAA for their opposition to film labeling. "He does not speak for us," the director charged.

Stone did some high-profile lobbying for film labeling Friday, meeting with House Speaker Thomas Foley, D-Wash., and Sen. Dennis DeConcini, D-Ariz., urging them to give filmmakers the right to label movies that have been materially altered.

"Even dog food has a label tell-

See LABELING on page 22

The Hollywood Reporter

Labeling

Continued from page 4—
ing us what is in the package," Stone said in an interview. "I made the point as strongly as I could that artists have the right to be protected from film mutilization."

Stone was in town for the White House correspondents dinner as well as casting for a new film, which he would not discuss, and was drafted by the Directors Guild of America to meet with the lawmakers Friday.

Stone also took the opportunity to make another pitch for opening the files pertaining to the JFK assassination.

"DeConcini and Foley were all for it — they both buy into the idea," Stone said. He leveled criticism at the Hollywood establishment for failing to back him in his quest to open the secret files.

"I can't believe how little support I got for this," he said. "More open government is good for the Hollywood community."

On labeling, Stone said that while both lawmakers appeared sympathetic to filmmaker rights, neither offered a specific commitment to support the legislation, although DeConcini may hold a hearing on the bill soon.

"Foley is a film buff and doesn't like colorization but his wife does," Stone said. "I think Foley can bring this forward. I told him I speak for a large community of artists and we don't want our work

desecrated."

Stone, like many prominent directors, has never had his films altered because he has the clout to include such provisions in his contracts. Smaller directors have no such protection.

He criticized the Motion Picture Association of America and its president, Valenti, for opposing labeling, which they claim is unconstitutional and would result in people not wanting to watch the films.

"Valenti is the bulldog — the Doberman pinscher on this issue," Stone said of the man who criticized "JFK" as propaganda. "He does not speak for us. Why they would object to this bill is beyond me. The First Amendment also applies to directors."

Stone said he had not heard of plans by Warner Home Video to distribute videocassettes of "JFK" to all members of Congress on May 20, the day Valenti is slated to testify in support of legislation to open the Kennedy files.

"I haven't heard about that," Stone said.

He also denied that there was any feud going on between Valenti and himself.

The Justice Department — which does the administration's bidding — has opposed opening the files, leading many to suspect President Bush would veto the legislation.

"If he does that it will be a campaign issue which will hurt him," Stone said. □