

BLASTS ANTI-WAR CELEBS



SEAN PENN

Action hero Jean-Claude Van Damme let loose a volley of verbal abuse at anti-war celebrities critical of President George Bush's plan to launch a pre-emptive strike on Iraq. Van Damme's targets include Ed Asner, Madonna, Richard Gere, Martin Sheen and Sean Penn, shown here visiting an Iraqi hospital in Baghdad during a "fact-finding" mission



RD GERE



MARTIN SHEEN

just sits back and makes deals. "George is right about innocent lives being lost - but some lives lost now will save whole future generations," Van Damme explains.

"How many more towers and lives do Americans have to lose before George realizes that regimes like Saddam's are evil and must be destroyed?"

Meanwhile, Sean Penn went to Baghdad on a fact-finding mission and criticized U.S. leaders for failing to make their evidence against Iraq public.

"Sean Penn is a pal of mine," Van Damme notes.

"He's a great actor, director and humanitarian, but a bad weapons inspector."

He also blasts peaceniks Barbra Streisand, Ed Asner and Jessica Lange. "They are entitled to their opinions," he says.

"But don't they know their opinions would be squashed in Iraq for speaking out against the government? Then let's see how they would react!"

"Having a peaceful Richard Gere Buddhist-type of philosophy is lost against a criminal madman like Saddam," says Van Damme, who's established a foundation to supply humanitarian aid for the children of Iraq.

The star of action films like Universal Soldier and Timecop knows his opinion may get him blacklisted in the overwhelmingly anti-Bush Tinseltown community -

but he still "feels compelled" to speak his mind.

"I just don't understand why Saddam has so much support in Hollywood," he says.

"This is a man who denies ties to terrorists but sends money to the families of every Palestinian suicide bomber. The terrorists need to love their children more and hate us less.

"I cried when I saw the World Trade Center towers collapse on TV. It made me realize how much I love America. And now it angers me when I see American

'Some of those in Hollywood are part of the axis of ignorance!'

rail against this great country. Hollywood exports the American Dream - freedom. They should live or leave it!

"Every man, woman and child is entitled to freedom. Let's not let our soldiers go off to war hearing that their favorite big and small-screen heroes are not behind them."

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- ROBIN MIZRAH

