

ADL ATTACK ON "THE PASSION" IS UNFAIR

A representative from the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), Rabbi Eugene Korn, attended a private screening of the Mel Gibson movie, "The Passion," on August 8 in Houston. On August 11, Abraham Foxman, ADL national director, issued a news release on the film. He said the movie "will fuel hatred, bigotry and anti-Semitism." Foxman also charged, "The film unambiguously portrays Jewish authorities and the Jewish mob as the ones responsible for the decision to crucify Jesus." He is asking Gibson to modify the movie so that it will be "historically accurate, theologically sound and free of anti-Semitic messages."

Catholic League president William Donohue responded as follows:

"Mel Gibson would be wise to ignore the ADL's politicized attack on 'The Passion.' Scores of Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Orthodox Christians have seen the film and have had nothing but praise for it. Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America, said it best when he said, 'I don't see what the controversy is all about. This is a compelling piece of art.'

"The controversy began in April when it was reported that the ADL and the Secretariat of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) assembled Catholic and Jewish scholars to address the movie. Working with an unauthorized script, the scholars—none of whom had seen the film—denounced it.

"On June 11, the USCCB issued a statement that embarrassed the Catholic scholars: 'Neither the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, nor any other committee

of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, established this group, or authorized, reviewed or approved the report written by its members.’ Subsequently, Mark Chopko, general counsel for the USCCB, issued an apology. The ADL has yet to apologize.

“The movie is not anti-Semitic and does not need to be changed. Revisionist history is dishonest history and must be resisted.”