

ADL BLAMES POPE

When the pope went to the Middle East in May, two Syrian leaders made anti-Semitic remarks in his presence. On May 13, the ADL ran an ad in the *New York Times* blaming the pope for not confronting the leaders. It ended by saying, "Pope John Paul II, we were greatly saddened by your silence."

We learned of the ad two days before it ran and immediately issued a comment to the media. Of special interest to us was the invidious charge of "silence," an obvious reference to the alleged silence of Pope Pius XII during the Holocaust. We sided with Eugene Fisher, the interreligious relations director for the U.S. bishops, who wrote "For Catholics, the phrase 'the silence of the pope' has become so encrusted with bitterness and controversy that its use is increasingly perceived by us as an insult motivated by anti-Catholicism."

We beckoned the ADL to stop with the "it's never enough" refrain. We added that, "The pope is a world traveler who hears offensive things said all the time—about his religion and that of others." We even offered a reality check: "Now according to the ADL's logic, the pope is guilty of anti-Catholicism for remaining silent when Orthodox priests and monks in Greece recently called him the 'grotesque, two-horned monster of Rome' and 'the anti-Christ.'"

We concluded our remarks reminding the ADL of the obvious. "Finally," we said, "what about the Holy Father's voluminous statements, writings and diplomatic efforts condemning anti-Semitism? Does this carry any weight with the ADL? If so, they shouldn't be so quick to second-guess. If not, why not?"

We are pleased to note that our friends at Toward Tradition, Rabbi Daniel Lapin and Yarden Weidenfeld, criticized the ADL for its "needless attack on Pope John Paul II."