

MEL GIBSON APOLOGIZES; CRITICS EXPLOIT THE MOMENT

In the early morning hours of July 28, Mel Gibson was arrested for suspicion of drunk driving. But what got him into the most trouble was his comment, "The Jews are responsible for all the wars in the world."

Our immediate response was to label Gibson's remark "indefensible," "anti-Semitic" and "irresponsible." But we also noted that "Fortunately, he has apologized for his bigoted outburst." Then we turned our attention elsewhere: "Unfortunately, his apology is being rejected by some who should know better." We were referring to Abraham Foxman, head of the ADL, who branded Gibson's apology "unremorseful and insufficient."

We did not hesitate to compare the ADL's reaction to the Catholic League's response to bigotry. "We have quite a file on Ted Turner at the Catholic League," Bill Donohue told the media. "Unlike Foxman, I have accepted every apology Turner has ever made for his anti-Catholic outbursts, all of which were made while he was sober. Indeed, I even went so far as to say that 'no one in his right mind' would ever put Ted Turner 'in the same camp with a Klansman or an inveterate bigot.'"

Donohue also noted that when radio shock-jocks Opie and Anthony apologized for their orchestrated anti-Catholic stunt in St. Patrick's Cathedral a few years back, he not only accepted their apology, he was the first guest on their new CBS radio show and welcomed their return.

"But Mel's enemies will never cut him a break," Donohue said. That's because "Their real goal is to discredit 'The Passion of the Christ,' and that is why their propaganda machine is in full gear."

On August 1, Gibson released a statement saying, "There is no excuse, nor should there be any tolerance, for anyone who thinks or expresses any kind of anti-Semitic remark. I want to apologize specifically to everyone in the Jewish community for the vitriolic and harmful words that I have said..." Gibson said he now wants to meet one-on-one with leaders in the Jewish community "to discern the appropriate path for healing."

Donohue responded by saying, "Mel Gibson's apology is a model of contrition, and it reflects the genuineness of his faith."

Regrettably, there are some for whom no amount of forgiveness will suffice (see p. 4 for some examples). That's because they are too busy exploiting the moment in an attempt to besmirch "The Passion."