

MUSLIMS SHOULD CONDEMN MUSLIM VIOLENCE

According to the June 15 *New York Sun*, Harvard professor Jessica Stern told a New York audience on June 14 that criticism of Muslim clerics for not condemning Muslim violence was unwarranted. "I've heard a lot of bashing of Muslim clerics for not stepping up to the plate and condemning extremist violence," she was quoted as saying. "But Catholic priests are not stepping up to condemn those who kill abortion doctors...[and] rabbis are not condemning the violent settlers' movement."

Forced moral equivalency is immoral, and that is exactly what Jessica Stern was promoting. The silence of Muslim clerics in the face of Muslim violence is well known. But when it comes to condemning the killing of abortionists, the Catholic clergy have an impeccable record. It should be noted, too, that as the *Sun* pointed out on June 15, rabbis everywhere condemned Yigal Amir's 1995 assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin—the very incident that Stern cited as an example of Jewish silence.

There has not been a single abortionist killed in the U.S. since 1998. When there were killings in the mid-1990s, Cardinal Roger Mahony of Los Angeles, chairman of the Pro-Life Activities of the bishops' conference, said that such shootings make "a mockery of everything we stand for." When there were two killings at Massachusetts abortion clinics, Cardinal Bernard Law not only denounced them, he ordered a moratorium on sidewalk protest vigils outside abortion clinics in Boston. Cardinal John O'Connor's response in New York was profound: "If anyone has an urge to kill an abortionist, kill me instead."

Just days before Stern's speech, a report of Muslim violence

against Iraqi Christians was released. The study, Incipient Genocide, details “the deaths of Christian children—including babies—laypeople, priests and nuns who were burned, beaten or blown up in car bombs throughout the past few years.” Moreover, Christian girls are being raped and having nitric acid thrown in their faces for not wearing veils. And the Muslim silence is deafening.