

# THE ADL'S DEFINITION OF AN ANTI-SEMITITE

If someone makes an anti-Semitic statement, does that mean he's an anti-Semite? It depends. Consider the way the ADL judges anti-Semitism these days.

ADL chief Abraham Foxman initially said that while he had a problem with "The Passion of Christ," he did not think Mel Gibson was an anti-Semite. He quickly changed his mind and branded Gibson anti-Semitic. Within a day, Foxman changed his mind again saying, "I'm not ready to say he's an anti-Semite." He has since changed his mind again, charging that Gibson is "infected" with anti-Semitism.

"The Gospel of John" is a movie that has just been released. The script follows the scriptural text to the letter, including those passages that upset many Jews. Yet the ADL said the film was a "responsible" treatment of the text, raising questions whether it is Gibson's "traditional" Catholicism that accounts for the ADL's vendetta against him.

Silvio Berlusconi is Italy's Prime Minister and one of the richest persons in Europe. He got so upset last summer with a German legislator that he said the lawmaker would make a "perfect" Nazi guard in a movie. This upset Jews throughout Europe. Then in the fall Berlusconi quipped that Mussolini was a "benign" dictator who "did not murder anyone." In fact, he said, "Mussolini sent people on holiday to internal exile." Again, European Jews were up in arms. Immediately following this remark, the ADL presented Berlusconi with its Distinguished Statesman Award. This, in turn, led American Jewish leaders to blast the ADL.

Gregg Easterbrook is a writer for the *New Republic*. He recently criticized Disney chief Michael Eisner and Miramax

chief Harvey Weinstein for irresponsibly releasing the movie "Kill Bill." He charged that they were "Jewish executives" who "worship money above all else." The ADL went bonkers branding Easterbrook an anti-Semite. The author was immediately defended by his Jewish friends at the magazine. When Easterbrook apologized, the ADL called it "insufficient."

When Foxman was recently asked about a comment made some time ago by singer Dolly Parton—"The Jews control Hollywood" is what she said—the ADL executive brushed it off as "anti-Semitic stereotyping." When pressed whether she was an anti-Semite, Foxman said "no."

Foxman has a new book out called, *Never Again: The Threat of the New Anti-Semitism*. In it the reader finds him listing real anti-Semites, along with those who clearly are not. Perhaps the most irresponsible listing is that of William F. Buckley, Jr. Not only is Buckley not an anti-Semite, anyone familiar with the author knows he has been an outspoken opponent of anti-Semitism.

All of which leaves us where we began. Who qualifies as an anti-Semite these days at the ADL?