

VIOLENCE AND “THE PASSION” (PART ONE)

Now that the “The Passion of the Christ” has run its course, the record will show that not one act of violence against a Jewish person occurred anywhere in the world, thus confounding those who made such dire predictions. Indeed, the movie played in literally scores of countries, all without violence.

Those who predicted that the movie would generate violence need to explain themselves. And in some cases, they need to apologize to Christians. Recall that it was ADL director Abe Foxman who said last January that Mel Gibson is “hawking it [the film] on a commercial crusade to the churches of this country.” He then concluded, “That’s what makes it so dangerous.” In other words, it’s not lax Christians who are a danger to Jews, nor is it the anti-war protesters who carry banners bashing Israel; it’s those Catholics and Protestants who go to church on Sundays that Jews have to fear the most. In a press release on this issue, we said, “Not only is this radically wrong—indeed it’s dangerously wrong—it’s also insulting to practicing Christians.”

Calls to censor the movie were voiced in many countries, including the U.S. In France, three Jews who claimed to be acting as spokesmen for the Jewish community, the Benlolo brothers, went into court to ban the film. Moreover, there was only one nation in the world where the movie has been banned—Israel; Shapira Films had the Israeli distribution rights and refused to release the film. Now just imagine the uproar if a Catholic country were to ban a film Catholics found offensive!

Every time there is a Catholic-bashing movie, play or art exhibition, the critics lecture Catholics on their need for tolerance. For example, Catholics are told that artists like

to “push the envelope” and to “make people think.” But somehow none of this elite spin seems to apply to Mel’s masterpiece. Which just goes to show that Catholics have been lied to all along.