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HEADLINE: REEL REVIEW;
Film won't follow '**Protocols**'

BYLINE: Larry Ratliff, EXPRESS-NEWS FILM CRITIC

BODY:

"**Protocols** of Zion," an anti-conspiracy-theory documentary, works to debunk the notion that the Jews have had a plan for world domination for years.

Marc **Levin**, a New York Jew, takes to the streets to investigate "The **Protocols** of the Elders of Zion," a book he contends is falsely believed to contain a **Jewish** master plan.

Levin, who has been working in TV quite a bit lately, leaps into a hotbed of controversy. We only have to look at newspaper headlines or the evening news to realize that religious intolerance and hate is a hot button in many areas of the world.

He's certainly not shy. The son of veteran documentary maker Alan **Levin**, who accompanies his son at times here, doesn't back off from sidewalk debate.

Levin engages Arab-Americans, Christian evangelicals, black nationalists, Aryan skinheads, Kabbalist rabbis and even Holocaust deniers and survivors in his quest to douse flames of hate.

Some of the give-and-take dialogue is compelling. Unfortunately, **Levin** is not a strong film presence himself.

His points can be effective in impromptu debate. But the filmmaker himself is never compelling enough to glue the viewer to the subject

matter.

Academy Award-winning documentary filmmaker Michael Moore ("Bowling for Columbine") has much the same lackluster film presence. Moore, however, is clever enough to punch up his dialogue with artistic snippets, although he went overboard in "Fahrenheit 9/11."

"**Protocols** of Zion" manages to engage in spurts due to the volatile nature of the subject matter. It's clear that **Levin** ("Soldiers in the Army of God") takes his work seriously.

In lieu of providing iron-clad answers, this documentary dives into the whirlwind of controversy and invites viewers to form their own opinions.

MPAA rating: none (profanity, nudity)

Running time: 93 minutes

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Protocols of Zion

* * 1/2 (two and a half jalapeños)

--**Larry says:** Diving into a hotbed of controversy

GRAPHIC: Marc **Levin** (second from right) interviews Dr. H. Awadallah in New Jersey for '**Protocols** of Zion.' PHOTO: THINKFILM CO.

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