

DE BLASIO OKAY WITH ANTI-SEMITIC OPERA



Bill Donohue comments on New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio's position on "The Death of Klinghoffer," which debuted last night at the Metropolitan Opera:

De Blasio defends "The Death of Klinghoffer" on free speech grounds, as if that empties the issue. After all, nothing stops him from also condemning the opera. Others, including the Catholic League, saw it as a free speech issue, but also hammered it as anti-Semitic; we brought a contingent to the protest last month and again last night.

Yesterday, de Blasio defended himself saying, "I think the American way is to respect freedom of speech. Simple as that." Really? Then why did he try to censor the free speech of an African-American pro-life group, Life Always, in 2011? He was the City's Public Advocate at the time, and what he advocated was government censorship of speech.

Life Always displayed a huge billboard in SoHo showing a picture of a young black girl with the inscription, "The most dangerous place for an African-American is in the womb." De Blasio used his public office to pressure the group to take it down. "The billboard simply doesn't belong in our city. The ad violates the values of New Yorkers." Not sure what is worse—his ignorance or his arrogance.

No sooner had de Blasio been elected mayor when he demonstrated his fondness for censorship by picking Khalid

Latif to be on his advisory team. Latif is the same Muslim chaplain who led a campaign to censor the Danish cartoons depicting Muhammad in an unfavorable light from being displayed at New York University.

De Blasio's enthusiasm for censorship is a defining element of his character. He raised money in Nicaragua for the repressive Sandinistas, and he and his wife showed their love for muzzling free speech by honeymooning in Castro's Cuba.

De Blasio's refusal to condemn "The Death of Klinghoffer" has nothing to do with free speech; rather, it has to do with his ideology.