

De Blasio Suffers From Leadership Problems

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New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio's disastrous first year was not the result of mistakes – it was the result of his ideology. Mistakes can be rectified. Hard-core ideological convictions are rarely reversed, which is why things will get worse in 2015.

Mayor Rudy Giuliani inherited a mess made by Mayor David Dinkins. Eight years later New York rebounded. In his 12 years in office, Mayor Mike Bloomberg changed some of Giuliani's policies, but he never tampered with the quality-of-life issues that his predecessor worked hard to achieve.

In one year, de Blasio has managed to undo the reforms of the past 20 years. "The bums are back." That's a common refrain on the street these days. Giuliani and Bloomberg tackled the issue of homelessness head-on, providing alternatives to all-night loitering. Now commuters going to work in the morning regularly find men sleeping in the corridors of Penn Station. Beggars have returned as well, hustling on the trains and sidewalks.

Under Giuliani, able-bodied adults on public assistance were required to work as a condition of welfare. But under de Blasio, workfare is being eliminated. Over the next two years, able-bodied welfare recipients will be allowed to go to school – they can go full time to college for a year – and enroll in training programs. But 60 percent of these people lack a high school diploma; most of them dropped out of school.

Under Bloomberg, failing public schools were shut down and replaced with smaller ones. Under de Blasio, failing public

schools are being rewarded with more money. They will be given \$150 million in additional resources over the next two years. In fact, lousy teachers will not be given the boot – they will be given more money for professional training. When it comes to schools that actually succeed, such as Catholic schools and charter schools in the inner city, de Blasio has no use for them.

He opposes school vouchers and wants to kill charter schools. Yet he says he is a friend of the poor. Under Giuliani and Bloomberg, the police were well respected and morale was good. Under de Blasio, the cops have been demonized and morale is in the toilet. By embracing Al Sharpton, he has poisoned race relations – by embracing the urban anarchists, he has promoted incivility. All of these decisions were well-thought through, a function of his extremist and polarizing ideas.

De Blasio's refusal to march in the St. Patrick's Day Parade inspired other politicians to do the same, sending a message to Irish Catholics that they had better get in line with parade-busting homosexuals. His promise to destroy the horse-and-carriage industry targets Irish and Latino Catholics, and is as unnecessary as his St. Patrick's Day antics.

Most New Yorkers did not vote for de Blasio, or for any of the other mayoral candidates. Nonetheless, they should have known that a man who raised money for the Communists in Nicaragua, honeymooned in Communist Cuba – illegally – and sided with the Occupy Wall Street thugs, was a man destined to crush New York City. But the good news is that they are learning fast. I just hope it's not too late – he has three more years to wreak havoc.

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