

DE BLASIO'S MONUMENT GOALS ARE TROUBLING

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio's panel that will determine which monuments and other markers should be taken down:

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio has empanelled 18 persons to assess which monuments and other markers should be removed from city property. He said the panel "will develop guidelines on how the City should address monuments seen as oppressive and inconsistent with the values of New York City."

It is telling that the mayor did not say that the panel should determine which monuments are inconsistent with American values. Instead, he cited the "values of New York City." This begs two questions: What are New York City values, and who decides what they are? His past forays into this area are cause for grave concern.

In February 2011, a pro-life group, Life Always, displayed a huge billboard in the SoHo section of New York that showed a picture of a young black girl with the inscription, "The most dangerous place for an African American is in the womb." Prominent African Americans endorsed the billboard; it was displayed during Black History Month.

The billboard incensed de Blasio, who was then New York's Public Advocate. He not only failed to be an advocate for the unborn, or for pro-life New Yorkers, he actually recommended censoring it. "The billboard simply doesn't belong in our city. The ad violates the values of New Yorkers."

In other words, if an ad offends de Blasio's values, it offends "the values of New Yorkers." Not content to criticize an ad he objects to, he sought to muzzle the free speech rights of black pro-life men and women. He succeeded.

De Blasio's passion for declaring abortion rights to be representative of New York values led him to support Governor Andrew Cuomo's equally censorial approach to this subject. In 2014, Cuomo railed against what he called "extreme conservatives" who are "pro-life, pro-assault weapons, anti-gay." He said such persons "have no place in the state of New York, because that's not who New Yorkers are."

So New Yorkers opposed to abortion "have no place in the state of New York," and should get out of town. De Blasio said he agreed with that position "100 percent."

Let's be honest about this: De Blasio is not asking the panel to develop guidelines that offend traditional moral values—he is asking them to craft recommendations that offend his trendy political values.

This explains why he is sure not to mess with the New York City street named after Planned Parenthood founder Margaret Sanger, despite the fact that she was a notorious racist and an anti-Catholic bigot. While he might be upset with her racism (the latter animus doesn't even register with him), it is not likely to trump his fondness for Planned Parenthood. Look for the sign to stay.

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