

“DEATH OF KLINGHOFFER” DISTORTS HISTORY

Recently, the Catholic League joined the protest of “The Death of Klinghoffer,” the opera that was inspired by the tragic death of Leon Klinghoffer.

The Catholic League brought a contingent to the protest of “The Death of Klinghoffer” on September 22, which was opening night of the Metropolitan Opera’s new season; the first performance of this opera was scheduled for October 20. We joined the protest partly out of solidarity with our Jewish friends, many of whom have felt the wounds of this propaganda exercise; we were also enraged that the opera falsified history.

The facts are not in dispute. In 1985, PLO barbarians picked out an innocent elderly Jewish-American passenger on the Achille Lauro, an Italian cruise ship, shot him in the face and then threw him and his wheelchair overboard. Benjamin Netanyahu, the current Prime Minister of Israel, was the Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations at that time, and he correctly identified the guilty parties. “It [the hijacking and the murder] was carried out with the full prior knowledge and approval of the PLO chairman” [Yasser Arafat].

Predictably, Arafat lied about his role. He charged that the hijacking was aimed at “covering up the terrorist crime and open piracy of Israel, in conjunction with the United States, to destroy the PLO headquarters and assassinate PLO leaders.” Indeed, he claimed that this event was part of a “conspiracy mapped out to liquidate the PLO.”

This matters because those associated with the opera have repeatedly said that they chose to be “neutral,” giving “voice to all” by not “taking sides” in the Israeli-Palestinian

dispute. But not all sides have an equal claim on the truth. Moreover, when it comes to the Klinghoffer episode, the only morally legitimate side to take is the Jewish side. Consider what a terrorist in the opera, Rambo, sang to Klinghoffer: "You are always complaining of your suffering but whenever poor people are gathered they can find Jews getting fat. America is one big Jew." This wasn't being neutral—it was being obscene. Donohue urged all Catholics to be at the rally.

Bill Donohue brought a contingent to the protest of "The Death of Klinghoffer" that took place on the evening of September 22nd across the street from New York City's Lincoln Center. On October 20, opening night of the opera, there was an even bigger rally in the same location. Once again, a Catholic League contingent was present.

