



Bill de Blasio: A Progressive Mayor for All New Yorkers

Jerry Krase (August 28, 2013)



Bill De Blasio I believe has the best chance among real progressives to win the mayoralty and to take New York City in a different, more hopeful direction. It's time for New Yorkers to take back THEIR city from those who have used it to enrich themselves at our expense. Bill de Blasio can help us put the Statue of Liberty back on its pedestal in New York politics. He also just happens to be Italian.

[Bill DeBlasio](#) [2] I believe has the best chance among real progressives to win the mayoralty and to take New York City in a different, more hopeful direction. He's genuine, which makes him somewhat boring at times. He's bright, and that might scare some people.

He knows public policy without being a wonk. He knows how the system works but is not an insider. I am sure he will use all his energy and skills to better the lives of all New Yorkers as opposed to only his friends, relatives, and country club members as has been the case for the past two decades. Finally, I think it's time for New Yorkers to take back THEIR city from those who have used it to enrich themselves at our expense. Bill de Blasio can help us put the Statue of Liberty back on its pedestal in New York politics.

Now that Bill De Blasio is almost a front runner in the first round of the Democratic Party primary for Mayor of New York City which will take place September 10th, I am reluctant to urge



people to vote for him, as for the past 20 years the front runner has been the worst thing to happen to ordinary New Yorkers like myself since [Rudy Giuliani](#) [3] and [Michael Bloomberg](#) [4]. It has also been tough avoiding watching the incredibly uninspiring and uninformative alleged “debates” on one or another television station that obviously sees its role as enhancing the ignorance of potential voters. From left to right all of the media moguls seem to have conspired to make the Democratic Party contenders appear to be part of another reality show --- “The Great Primary Race,” “NYC Idol,” or perhaps “Prance with the Also Rans.”

Two of the Democratic Party mayoral candidates are Italian American and therefore.

Please note that I am not urging an “ethnic” vote, as, for example, that would guarantee that, given the increasing allegiance of Italian Americans to the Republican Party, both Bill De Blasio and Sal Albanese would get trounced. Sal Albanese is a long-term (as opposed to “old”) friend, and one I will always be indebted to for both his personal help at a difficult time as well as his great progressive service when he served in the City Council (1982-98). His Quixotesque runs for U.S. Congress (1992) and N.Y.C. Mayor (1997) have demonstrated his willingness to endure defeat for good intentions. Both he, and my final choice for Mayor, Bill De Blasio, follow in the Progressive Italian American traditions of Fiorello LaGuardia, Vito Marcantonio and Mario (not Andy) Cuomo; as opposed to the Neanderthal traditions of Rudy Giuliani, Rick Santorum, and too many to mention others. I must reveal that Bill De Blasio is a neighbor with whom I’ve had the pleasure of dinner with his lovely, but misquotable, wife Chirlane McCray at the house of a good friend. I also met his son Dante twice whose “fro” makes me feel young again, but the personal is not why I hope Bill’ll win the Democratic Party Primary on September 10th.

Having been more than disappointed with the rightward movement of the Democratic Party in recent years, I think [David Sirota](#) [5], writing in Salon best (better) expresses my reasons for supporting Bill de Blasio and “America’s new progressive revolution.” Sirota, and I believe De Blasio’s campaign has impact far beyond The Big Apple. So far he has been successful “...by coupling criticism of inequality with specific public policy proposals to combat such inequality...by government-based populist initiatives that the Times notes have “alarmed many business leaders and Bloomberg aides...de Blasio proposes to raise income taxes on those making over \$500,000, reduce the city’s huge corporate subsidies and use the reclaimed resources to finance universal pre-kindergarten. He also backs using the city’s financial leverage to force municipal contractors to pay living wages, and he proposes to rein in the stop-and-frisk program that in practice persecutes New Yorkers for the alleged crime of not being white and/or rich. In sum, he is not running on a gauzy rhetorical criticism of inequality, he is running on explicit proposals to use the power of government to combat that inequality.”

I was born At one end of Ninth Street, Brooklyn in the low-income The Red Hook Houses and, metaphorically, was able to move “up the hill” to my current perch near Prospect Park in over-gentrified Park Slope. Like many New Yorkers of past (pre-Rudy/Mike) generations, the taxes paid by the much better off made the economic playing field a bit more level for me. It gave us a chance to succeed by doing our best, and helped us overcome class and ethnic hurdles. New York City at its best was an engine for creating a large middle-class out of poor and working class people. In partial payment of that great debt I owe, I’ve been doing pro bono consulting work and community service even before getting my first, and last, job at Brooklyn College. As to “Stop and Frisk,” when I was a tough looking, albeit light -skinned, teenager the cops also hassled and roused my pale-faced friends and I, especially when we strayed outside our own neighborhoods. But, most often, we were actually up to no good as opposed to simply looking like no goodniks. Frankly speaking, I don’t want my black and brown friends and family members to have to stay out of the sun and use skin-lightening creams to keep from getting falsely arrested. Bill de Blasio can get us back on the track for a better New York for all New Yorkers.



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Links

[1] <http://www.iitaly.org/files/deblasio11377706336jpg>

[2] <http://www.billdeblasio.com/>

[3] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudy_Giuliani

[4] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Bloomberg

[5] http://www.salon.com/2013/08/15/americas_new_progressive_revolution/