

BOY SCOUTS AUTONOMY IS THE ISSUE



Bill Donohue comments on the expected decision today by the Boy Scouts of America to rescind its ban on homosexuals:

The issue of allowing homosexuals to join the Boy Scouts is second only to the most important issue: the autonomy of the organization to craft its own strictures absent outside pressure. Unfortunately, outside pressure is what forced the need for a vote.

Edmund Burke called them "the little platoons." Tocqueville called them "voluntary associations." Political scientists speak of "civil society." Sociologists refer to them as "mediating institutions." They all mean the same thing: the critical role played by social institutions that intervene between the state and the individual; it is in these nooks and crannies that freedom is born.

Regrettably, the intermediate strata are today in jeopardy, the worst culprit being the federal government. Indeed, even on this issue, the president of the United States has unwisely decided to interject himself. And there is also the role of well-funded gay groups seeking to pressure the board members of the Boy Scouts. None of this is acceptable.

The Boy Scouts have already won the constitutional issue. Whether they now want to change their rules is their business. It is not our business. Which is why the Catholic League takes no stand on this matter.