

GOV. EHRlich'S HANDLERS FAIL—ISSUE STILL ALIVE

Catholic League president Bill Donohue was a guest today on the "Ron Smith Show," a WBAL-Baltimore radio show. The topic was the firing of Robert J. Smith, a Metro transit authority appointee, who offended Maryland Governor Robert Ehrlich last week when he said (on a cable TV show after hours), "Homosexual behavior, in my view, is deviant." Smith added, "I'm a Roman Catholic."

After Donohue discussed this issue with the host, callers were fielded for comment, one of whom was Robert Flanagan, Maryland's Secretary of Transportation. It led to a heated exchange between Donohue and Flanagan. Here is Donohue's account of what happened:

"The next time Governor Ehrlich's handlers want to get someone to defend their boss, they'd better get someone other than Flanagan. After Flanagan commented that Ehrlich appropriates money in his budget for non-public schools, including funds for textbooks in Catholic schools, I responded by saying that what Catholic schoolchildren learn about homosexuality is that it is 'intrinsically disordered.' Flanagan denied this was true, said he never learned it while attending Catholic schools and cited some priest whom he knows who doesn't teach this in church. To which I replied that it is in the *Catholic Catechism*. Flanagan said this wasn't true. Here is what paragraph 2357 of the *Catholic Catechism* says:

Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, tradition has always declared that "homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered."

"The real issue here is the right of government employees to voice their religious convictions in public with impunity.

Moreover, Robert Smith's remark is so innocuous that, up until recently, every sociology textbook on social problems listed homosexuality as deviant behavior. For wholly ideological reasons, there is an effort to normalize what psychologists have long referred to as inversion. In any event, Flanagan has certainly kept this issue alive. Hurrah for him."