

August 21, 1935

[Cancelling Boy Scout Jamboree]

FDR Speech File

● Reading Copy

President's Radio Address to
Boy Scouts cancelling Jamboree--
White House--August 21, 1935

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

For more than a year I had been looking forward to taking part in a great National Scout Jamboree to be held in Washington. ^{But} The best laid plans sometimes go awry. A splendid program and a wonderful camp had been prepared for the reception of thirty thousand Boy Scouts and Scouters in the National Capitol. You were coming here from every point of the compass, and, in addition to the American Scouts, our brother Scouts from twenty-seven other nations had accepted invitations to send delegations.

But, alas, a rather serious epidemic of Infantile Paralysis arose in the vicinity of Washington and, on August eighth, the United States Public Health Service and the Health Officers of the District and the nearby states concluded that to hold the Jamboree would be a hazard. With great reluctance,

therefore, we had to call it off.

But for this unfortunate happening I would have reviewed this day the thousands of Scouts lined up the length of Constitution Avenue, and later we would all have had a party on the White House lawn. I want you, in your own home towns, to know how sorry I am that I cannot be with you myself. I am in spirit with each and every one of your gatherings tonight.

You boys, old and young, in every part of this broad land -- present Scouts and former Scouts -- your numbers running into the millions -- constitute a very real part of our American citizenship. We are bound together in a democracy operating under a Constitution whose purpose was and is "to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence,

promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity."

The success of that Constitution is dependent on the attitude of mind and the degree of the spirit of unselfish cooperation that can be developed in individuals. Scouting is essentially and clearly a program for the development of that unselfish, cooperative attitude of mind. Scouting revolves around, not the ^{mere} theory of service to others, but the habit of service to others. Scouting makes the individual boy conscious of his obligation to his Patrol, to his Troop, to his community, to his State and to his Nation.

Even before you become of voting age, you actually have a part in civic affairs and you bear responsibilities in your home communities. We older citizens are very proud of

the many contributions that individual Scouts and Scout organizations have made to the relief of suffering, to the maintenance of good order and good health, and to the furtherance of good citizenship and good government.

You who are active Scouts are, in addition, learning many useful things -- knowledge which will stay with you all your lives. You are having opportunities to fall in love with and understand the great outdoors. Do not ever fall out with nature and her wide-open breathing spaces. Love them. They will sustain and strengthen you in later years when confining circumstances of life may tend to narrow the spirit or soul that is in you.

I do not have to tell you to throw yourselves, with all the enthusiasm and the energy that you have, into your Scout work, into the programs of your Patrols and

Troops and Councils. But I do want to express to you the very deep hope that when you grow older and get out into the stream of life, you will retain that same enthusiasm and energy and that you will apply it through every day and every year of your lives. The Scout motto BE PREPARED applies just as much to the wider service which is your opportunity when your full civic responsibilities are attained.

Just as you are individually a necessary part of your Patrol or your Troop today, so will you become necessary parts of the citizenship of your communities. I do not have to remind you that one individual who lags behind slows up the whole Troop. In the Navy we have an old saying - that the speed of a Fleet is no greater than the speed of the slowest ship. When you go out into life

you will come to understand that the individual in your community who always says "I can't" or "I won't" -- the individual who by inaction or opposition slows up honest, practical, far-seeing community effort, is the fellow who is holding back civilization and holding back the objectives of the Constitution of the United States.

We need more Scouts -- the more the better -- for the record shows that, taking it by and large, boys trained as Scouts make good citizens.

I hope a Jamboree, in place of the one we missed this year, will be planned for sometime in the future. In the meantime, I send you my warm greetings, personally, and as the Honorary President of the Boy Scouts of America. Good luck to you and carry on!

Franklin Roosevelt
--- (original)

RADIO ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
FROM THE WHITE HOUSE TO THE
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

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HOLD FOR RELEASE

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FOR THE PRESS

AUGUST 21, 1935

CAUTION: This address of the President, broadcast by him from the White House to the Boy Scouts of America MUST BE HELD in confidence until released.

NOTE: Release to all editions of newspapers appearing on the streets NOT EARLIER than 8:45 o'clock P. M., E.S.T.

Care must be exercised to prevent premature publication.

STEPHEN EARLY
Assistant Secretary to the President

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From
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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 21, 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEF USHER:

Miss Le Hand has the original hand
copy of the President's radio address of tonight.
In case of accident, here are two carbons. One
might be given to Mr. Early when he comes back
to the White House at 8:00 tonight.

W.L.M.