

February 8, 1941

[31st Anniversary - Boy Scouts]

FDR Speech File

SPEECH OF THE PRESIDENT
TO THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
February 8, 1941

FELLOW SCOUTS:

The record of your achievements during the past year, as reported by Mr. Head, is something of which we can all be proud. I am most favorably impressed with the scope and magnitude of the emergency service training program now being developed by the Boy Scouts of America.

The Boy Scouts of today are approaching manhood at a grave hour in the world's history. Recent events have threatened the security of free men everywhere; and the democratic way of life is being challenged in many parts of the world. The United States must be strong if our free way of life is to be maintained and for our national policy we, as a nation, have adopted the motto of the Boy Scout organization --
BE PREPARED.

In many ways the Boy Scouts have sought to emulate the deeds of the early American pioneers who subdued the wilderness and established on a new found continent a better human society.

But it is not primarily for mere physical feats that the Boy Scout movement has won the high praise and the esteem of the American people. It is rather because the Boy Scouts have dedicated themselves to the development of those qualities of character and citizenship upon which the future of our democracy rests.

In this grave hour national defense dominates the heart and mind and soul of America. The government must take the major responsibility since it alone represents all of the people acting in concert. But the government cannot and should not pre-empt those fields of private endeavor which have become an indispensable part of life in America.

You who are members of the Boy Scouts have a great opportunity in your organization to do your part in this great task. In your Scout troops you have the opportunity to develop the type of leadership and group cooperation which is so greatly needed in a democracy such as ours. You have opportunities in your Scouting program to develop those physical and mental qualities upon which the survival of a self-governing community depends.

The Boy Scouts have made and will continue to make an important contribution to the welfare of America's young manhood. The Boy Scouts have always responded generously when called into action in the service of their communities and their fellow citizens. The nation is confident that the Boy Scouts stand ready to contribute to the national welfare in these critical hours.

It follows, therefore, that I am proud of what you have done and are doing -- and proud of what I know you will do in playing your part in our American defense.

* * * * *

Franklin D. Roosevelt
Orig reading copy

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT
Broadcast from the White House,
In Commemoration of the thirty-first anniversary
of the Boy Scouts of America,
February 8, 1941, 7.35 P.M., E.S.T.

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Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

This is a transcript made by the White House stenographer from his shorthand notes taken at the time the speech was made. Underlining indicates words extemporaneously added to the previously prepared reading copy text. Words in parentheses are words that were omitted when the speech was delivered, though they appear in the previously prepared reading copy text.

INTRODUCTION

The words of your address during the past few days have been a most favorable contribution to something of which we can all be proud. I am most favorably impressed with the scope and the magnitude of the emergency service training program that is now being developed by the Boy Scouts of America.

The Boy Scouts of today are approaching a period of a grave hour in the world's history. Recent events have threatened the security of free men everywhere; and the democratic way of life is being challenged in many parts of the world. The United States must be strong if our free way of life is to be maintained and for our national policy we, as a nation, have adopted the motto of the Boy Scouts organization -- "BE PREPARED."

In many ways the Boy Scouts have sought to maintain the leadership of the only American movement who shared the mission and established as a new-found continent a better human society. But it is not primarily for mere physical tests that the Boy Scout movement has won the high praise and the esteem of the American people. It is rather because the Boy Scouts have dedicated themselves to the development of those qualities of character, (and) those qualities of citizenship, upon which the future of our democracy rests.

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The Boy Scouts have made and will continue to make an important contribution to the welfare of America's young manhood. The Boy Scouts have always responded generously when called into action in the service of their communities and their fellow citizens. And so the nation is confident that the Boy Scouts stand ready to contribute to the national welfare in these critical hours.

It follows, therefore, that I am proud of what you have done, I am proud of what you (and) are doing -- and I am proud of what I know you will do in days to come in playing your part in our American defense.

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I have a copy of B

HOLD FOR RELEASE
FOR THE PRESS

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FEBRUARY 8, 1941

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STEPHEN EARLY
Secretary to the President

P.P.H.
/ F

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• • • • •

Submitted by Scout Headquarters
Boy

ADDRESS OF FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND HONORARY
PRESIDENT OF THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

Fellow Scouts:

The record of your achievement during the past year, as reported by Mr. Head, is something of which we can well be proud. I am most favorably impressed with the scope and magnitude of the emergency service training program now being developed by the Boy Scouts of America.

At no time in its history has our country had greater need for this kind of serious work and preparation. Your plans for providing it seem admirably timed and suited to the needs of the hour and within the scope of the regular program of training for boys of Scout age.

I am proud of the achievements of our Boy Scouts. The movement's record of service in distress, disaster and every type of emergency, as well as its achievements for character building and citizenship training, commands universal respect. The present emergency affords an excellent opportunity for our Scouts to assume new responsibilities and to gain practical experience through patriotic service.

I congratulate you also that so many more of you are becoming qualified campers, because the vigorous outdoor activities of camp life do help to stiffen the fiber of our youth. I look forward to a generation of boys sturdier, more resourceful, more self-reliant as a result of their experiences in Scout camps.

I believe that Scouting, in line with the theme of our Anniversary Week, does help in a positive way to "strengthen and invigorate Democracy."

It is a voluntary movement -- boys join because they want to be Scouts, and men enroll because of a desire to help boys and to serve our country. We in America do not believe in regimenting youth.

It is a cross-section of American life -- for all boys, regardless of race or creed. I am especially happy that Scouting is reaching so many boys in the low-income areas of America.

Our very organization of Patrols and Troops is democratic. The Scout Patrol has been termed the smallest Democracy, operating as it does under a boy leader and giving due consideration to the rights and responsibilities of every member. This is also true of Cubbing, the younger boy program which operates on the basis of Cub Dens and Cub Packs.

Its Scout Oath and Law furnish the basis for self-discipline which must be exercised by citizens of a democracy.

It maintains that "no boy can grow into the best type of citizen without recognizing his obligation to God."

At this critical time when our country faces issues greater and more complicated than any ever before encountered, it is important that we do not, because of the many emergencies that must be met and the many things that need to be done, neglect the interests of our youth. We must never forget that our youth is our nation's greatest asset.

In building up solid character in our young people, we are insuring the future character of our nation. In a few years it will be these young people who will pick up the tasks that we have laid down, who will find the solutions for many of the problems that vex us today, who will for better or for worse discharge their civic responsibilities.

It is important, therefore, that insofar as lies in our power to equip them for the gigantic task ahead, we should help them to develop strength of body and strength of character and alertness of mind. They are going to maintain the principles of democracy in the years to come. It is our responsibility to keep burning in their hearts a devotion to these principles. This, I believe, Scout training is well qualified to do for boys of Scout age. That is why I was particularly happy to learn from the report that since we held the first of these broadcasts when the membership during the year was one million, two hundred and sixty-eight thousand, four hundred and forty-one, it has increased to more than two million in the past year.

Now a Movement so designed and so proven should fulfill its largest usefulness. Obviously, there has never been a time in our history when emphasis on these principles of Scouting was more needed than now. I know that on the prairies, the farm land of our country, there are thousands of boys who await with eagerness the opportunity to join some Troop or Patrol. I know that in the congested areas of our great cities are thousands more who need only the opportunity made possible through leadership and organization to enable them to be Scouts. I know that, gladly and voluntarily, the vast majority of the entire boyhood of our nation would enroll in this great character building and citizenship training enterprise, which for them is so full of the hardy and rich

adventure of life, if they had a chance. These very facts challenge you and me and every American citizen to supply the leadership and organization necessary to bring the benefits of Scouting to all American boys.

It must be recognized that if the Boy Scouts of America is to move forward in keeping with the need of the times and reach more boys, the men and women throughout America who have so generously supported its Local Councils should cooperate in making ample resources and leadership available on a voluntary basis as a demonstration of the appreciation of America for the Boy Scouts.

In view of the needs of the hour, I call upon the leadership of the Boy Scouts of America to redouble their efforts voluntarily to make this program reach more boys than ever before. I call upon the leaders of institutions where Scout Troops could be organized and sponsored upon their own initiative to invite the representatives of Scouting to show them how the boys connected with the institution can have the benefit of the Scout program. This is important not alone because of what Scouting will do for the boys who have the privilege of being Scouts, but because of the influence these boys exert in the home and in the neighborhood in stimulating idealism and loyalty to the American Way.

Boy Scouts of America
National Council
Presidential Broadcast
from Buffalo, N. Y. (WKBW)
Washington, D.C.
Buffalo, N. Y. (WKBW)
on Saturday, February 8, 1941
7:30 - 7:45 P.M. EST

National Broadcasting Company
Columbia Broadcasting System
Mutual Broadcasting System

NETWORK
OR STATION
ANNOUNCER:

Sign on

PROGRAM
ANNOUNCER:

This is the thirty-first anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America, a Movement founded on February 8th, 1910 "to promote, through organization and cooperation with other agencies, the ability of boys to do things for themselves and others, to train them in Scoutcraft and to teach them patriotism, courage, self-reliance and kindred virtues." This year the Boy Scouts have chosen as the theme of their Anniversary Week observance, "Scouting Strengthens and Invigorates Democracy."

Today and throughout the coming week more than a million and a half active members of the Boy Scouts of America are taking part in programs illustrative of this scheme. They have adopted a program of action by which they will make a definite contribution to the country.

Their Honorary President, the President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, has invited Mr. Walter W. Head, President of the Boy Scouts of America, and Dr. James E. West, Chief Scout Executive and Editor of BOYS' LIFE, to participate with him in a

special birthday program for Scouts and Scouters, Cubs and Cubbers, and their friends.

Mr. Head and Dr. West will give you some of the details concerning what has been accomplished during the past year and what the Scouts expect to do in the months ahead. They will address you from Buffalo, New York, where a huge anniversary gathering is carrying on a program as a part of the Boy Scout Week celebration.

It is a privilege to present to the Boy Scouts of America and their friends, Mr. Walter W. Head, President of the Boy Scouts of America.

MR. HEAD:

Ladies and gentlemen, fellow Scouts and Scouters, and friends of Scouting:

On this, the occasion of the thirty-first anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America, it is again my privilege and pleasure to extend greetings to all of you. To the National Broadcasting Company, the Columbia Broadcasting System, the Mutual Broadcasting System and all the cooperating local stations, we express our deep appreciation for their courtesy in making it possible for our membership, standing by throughout the length and breadth of the land, to hear a message from our Honorary President, the President of the United States, from our Chief Scout Executive, Dr. James E. West, and to rededicate ourselves to the principles and precepts of Scouting.

On behalf of the National Council and of the National Executive

Board, I extend greetings and appreciation to the membership of the Boy Scouts of America, the Scout Masters, Cub Masters and their assistants, and all others who participate in making the Scout Program effective and productive. To our beloved National Scout Commissioner, Daniel Carter Beard, I express affectionate regards.

Less Than a month ago, world Scouts and Scouters were saddened by the passing of Lord Baden-Powell, who was the Chief Scout of the World and the founder of the British Boy Scouts Association. To his enduring memory, we pay deep and profound tribute.

The record of Scouting in America during the past year is one of continued progress and achievement. We have gained substantially in numbers, but, more importantly, there has been evident an increased measure of devotion to the ideals of Scouting and a deepening sense of our responsibility as Scouts and Scouters to maintain, uphold and strengthen democratic principles within our land.

On this very day, February 8 - thirty-one years ago - the Boy Scouts of America was organized. Since that day, more than nine and one-half million boys and men have had the pleasure and satisfaction of participating in the Scout Program. In 1934, on the occasion of our first anniversary nation-wide broadcast, we reported a membership during the year of one million three hundred twenty-three thousand eight hundred and nineteen boys and men. During 1940, more than two million men and boys participated in the Movement.

On December 31, 1940, the total registration was one million, four hundred eighty-five thousand, six hundred and thirteen, as compared with one million, three hundred ninety-one thousand, eight hundred and seventy-three on December 31, 1939, a gain of ninety-three thousand, seven hundred and forty.

On the same day, three hundred forty-three thousand, four hundred and seventy-one public-spirited American citizens were rendering a valuable service to the youth of America through the Scout Program.

Cubbing, our younger boy program, likewise registered a significant gain in membership —23.5 per cent. On December 31, 1940, its membership totaled two hundred thirty-two thousand, sixty-six.

During the past year, a larger number of boys than ever before in our history derived benefits from Scout camping experience on a patrol and troop basis. More than 650,000 boys participated in some type of camp life. Our Philturn Rockymountain Scoutcamp, a wilderness camp in New Mexico for experienced Scouts, attracted young men from all parts of the nation who returned to their own communities more self-reliant, better trained, better qualified for future citizenship.

A dramatic, as well as practical accomplishment of the year has been the extension of our Emergency Service Program. This program includes specialized training for Scouts. In every Council, one or more emergency service units is being organized, related to the Troops and coordinated for Council action. The members of these units extend this intensive training to other Scouts. On many

occasions in time of disaster, such as floods, earthquakes, tornados, fires and explosions, Scouts have proved that they are qualified to be a genuine asset to the communities which they serve, supplementing the work of existing agencies.

Recognising that the opportunity for Scouting to be of service to the nation has never been greater than at the present critical time in our nation's history, the Scout Councils of the Country have unanimously pledged themselves to cooperate in a program of action during 1941, primarily directed to the strengthening and invigoration of democratic principles in our national life. Leaders of forty thousand, nine hundred and fifty-nine Troops and seven thousand and forty-five cub packs likewise adopted the pledge.

The record of progress achieved by the Boy Scouts of America both in the quality of service rendered and in the number of boys to whom the benefits of Scouting are made available, is justifiably a source of deep satisfaction to all those who participated in its realization. It is, however, much more. It constitutes an inspiration, a source of faith and confidence that the pledge which we have made will be fulfilled and that through the Scout program there will be made effective in the lives of increasing numbers of growing boys a glowing appreciation of the blessings of individual liberty, freedom of speech, freedom of action and freedom of religion, which will be reflected for years to come to the lasting benefit of future generations of Americans.

THESE ARE CUE LINES - DO NOT CHANGE

Ladies and gentlemen, fellow Scouts and Scouters and friends of Scouting, the President of the United States.

PRESIDENT
ROOSEVELT: Fellow Scouts The record of your achievement

(The text of the President's address will be released
from the White House)

THESE ARE CUE LINES - DO NOT CHANGE

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PROGRAM
ANNOUNCER: Now it is our privilege to introduce Dr. James E. West, Chief Scout Executive and Editor of BOYS' LIFE, who will lead you in the Scout Oath.

DR. WEST; We thank the President of the United States for the inspiration and encouragement of his message. All over America our great membership is assembled in Patrols and Troops and in great gatherings such as this in which I have the Privilege of participating tonight.

Scouts and Scouters, on this our thirty-first Anniversary, I ask you to join with me in a rededication to our Scout obligations. Wherever you may be will you please stand! (PAUSE)

Give the Scout Sign!

Now repeat with me the Scout Oath:

"On My Honor I will do my best:

To do my duty to God and my country, and to obey
the Scout Law;
To help other people at all times;

To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake,
and morally straight.

(PAUSE)

Never in our entire Scouting history has an Anniversary Day presented a greater challenge to us in Scouting. The ideals on which our nation was founded and which we have preserved and fortified through the years are on trial. There is no use in being weak and wishy-washy about it. Democracy itself is on trial. I ask that you, with me, as a

as a part of our Anniversary Day observance, resolve to fortify and strengthen our understanding of what it means to be an American, and make a determined effort to live for Democracy as participating citizens in the community, state and nation. This is easily within your capacity. Through the Scout Program of activities, with the Motto, BE PREPARED, you have been able to develop skills to make yourselves physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight.

We are going to rally as we have never rallied before to do all in our power to make our contribution to strengthening and invigorating Democracy. In this, there is a part for each and every one of you, no matter what your age or relationship to Scouting. Scouts are qualified in many skills. They are prepared. They are a large, uniformed body, trained to quick mobilization for service in any emergency.

THESE ARE CUE LINES - DO NOT CHANGE

May God be with each of you, give you strength, give you purpose and give you determination, first, to live your own life in harmony with the idealism for which we stand; then as an individual with a generous attitude, and with the cooperation of others, to do what you can to win the confidence and support of those with whom you associate, so that the ideals of Democracy are further strengthened and invigorated in the years to come.

PAUSE FIVE FULL SECONDS FOR BREAKAWAY

NETWORK This is the National Broadcasting Company/ Columbia Broadcasting System/
or Mutual Broadcasting System. We join these three prominent Scout leaders
STATION in wishing all Scouts and Scouters a very happy birthday.
ANNOUNCER: Sign off.

Greeting of the President, 31st Anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America, to be delivered over a national hookup from the White House Saturday evening, February 8, 1941. It is expected that the President will speak about 7:35 P.M., E.S.T. in a program to be broadcast from 7:30 to 7:45 P.M.

FELLOW SCOUTS:

The record of your achievements during the past year, as reported by Mr. Head, is something of which we can all be proud. I am most favorably impressed with the scope and magnitude of the emergency service training program now being developed by the Boy Scouts of America.

The Boy Scouts of today are approaching manhood at a grave hour in the world's history. Recent events have threatened the security of free men everywhere; ^{and} the democratic way of life is being challenged in many parts of the world. The United States must be strong if our free way of life is to be maintained and for our national policy we, as a nation, have adopted the motto of the Boy Scout organization - BE PREPARED.

In many ways the Boy Scouts have sought to emulate the deeds of the early American pioneers who subdued the wilderness and established on a new found continent a better human society. But it is not primarily for mere physical feats that the Boy Scout movement has won the high praise and the esteem of the American people. It is rather because the Boy Scouts have dedicated themselves to the development of those qualities of character and citizenship upon which the future of our democracy rests.

In this grave hour national defense dominates the heart and mind and soul of America. The government must ~~and will~~ take the major responsibility since it alone represents all of the people acting in concert. But the government cannot and should not pre-empt those

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You who are members of the Boy Scouts have a great opportunity in your organization to do your part in this great task. In your Scout troops you have the opportunity to develop the type of leadership and group cooperation which is so greatly needed in a democracy such as ours. You have opportunities in your Scouting program to develop those physical and mental qualities upon which the survival of a self-governing community depends.

The Boy Scouts have made and will continue to make an important contribution to the welfare of America's young manhood. The Boy Scouts have always responded generously when called into action in the service of their communities and their fellow citizens. The nation is confident that the Boy Scouts stand ready to contribute to the national welfare in these critical hours.

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in playing your ^{part} in our American
defense.*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 7, 1941

MEMORANDUM FOR MISS TULLY:

Just as I thought I had
it b'iled down to 400 words Mabel
Williams ups and counts 'em and
reports a total of 403. Pray do
your best to save me from impending
doom.

Bill

W.D.H.

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Mrs. Klar

STATEMENTS FILE

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I am proud of what you

days to remain