FDR Speech File

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 8, 1944.

FELLOW SCOUTS AND SCOUTERS:

Nothing would give me more pleasure than to speak to you personally today but as you know the war must be fought and won and that is our number one job at present.

From facts placed before me I know what a superb record of war service you have achieved since Pearl Harbor. Keep up the good work. But carry on your normal Scouting, too. It will be of lasting value to you as you grow into manhood. ~~Keep alive your contacts with the best men in your community~~. Live democracy in your Troop and in your home. ~~[redacted]~~ Get out of doors. Camp. And above all, live the Scout Oath and Law.

The man who is helping you most to achieve these high aims and ideals as a member of your Troop is your own Scoutmaster. He is your friend and counsellor. He gives leadership through the Scout program which is so attractive to thousands upon thousands of boys.

All persons who are or were active in the Boy Scout Movement -- and there are more than 11,400,000 of us -- have keen appreciation and deep respect for the volunteer service Scoutmasters render to boyhood.

~~As a former Troop Committeeman knowing the Scoutmaster's job, I am personally impressed with the way they are carrying on essential service during the present crisis in our nation's history~~. Thousands of Scoutmasters are in the Armed Forces but Scout Troops are carrying on because many eligible men have stepped in to fill their places. Indeed, more and more men who appreciate what Scouting is doing and what it means to America are offering their service to the Movement. ~~Former Scouts, now being released by the Armed Services, are renewing their contacts with Scouting. And, rightly so, they are heroes to boys~~.

Since the earliest days of Scouting the Scoutmasters have been an inspiration to all of us. I salute them.

As the Honorary President of the Boy Scouts of America, I am proud to learn that you are looking ahead to the day of World Brotherhood. It is, as you say, the hope of the world. If the people of all countries had taken the basic philosophy of Scouting to heart, perhaps there would never have been a second World War. It therefore behooves us all, as Scouts and Scouters, to foster mutual understanding and mutual respect. ~~The way to start is with the Scout Oath and Law.~~ Let us live up to what we do deeply believe.