FELLOW SCOUTS:

Again we celebrate our birthday – this time the twenty-sixth. Throughout the country we are observing Boy Scout Week in a series of special celebrations. This is the close of our Silver Jubilee Year and we have started a quarter of a century in Scouting history.

I am proud of the reports that have come to me, telling how Scout Troops are to celebrate this anniversary. For the most part, these reports feature an observance during Boy Scout Week which gives new emphasis to old traditions — service to our country, service to our neighbors, devotion to the cause of Scouting.

Those of us in Scouting have real cause for satisfaction, as pointed out by Mr. Reed a few minutes ago. Not only is our membership steadily increasing but our program has wider appeal than ever before. I am especially happy because of the development of a Senior
Program for older boys and young men. Through this program older Scouts
have an opportunity for adventure and for service. I have learned that
the Scout Alumni plan provides for former Scouts and present Scouts when
they become twenty-one years of age; that it will hold interest during
later years in active Scouting, in the betterment of conditions affecting
community life and contributing to the good of the Nation as a whole. This
objective is thoroughly worthwhile.

I have always believed in Scout training for boys and the
young men of our country. Scout training encourages them to get out
into the open, to develop good health habits, to encourage initiative
and resourcefulness. Too, it affords opportunity for a great
variety of useful services. It teaches respect for the law and materially
in the proper building of character and habits of life.

I am delighted that your National Executive Committee
has fixed the early summer of 1957 as the period for our Jamboree here
in Washington. It was a sad blow to us all when plans for the Jamboree
last year had to be cancelled. Let us hope that nothing will interfere
with our new plans and that the proposed Jamboree will be so successful that it will more than compensate for the disappointments of last year.

And so on this, our twenty-sixth anniversary, I extend to you, one and all, this word of personal greeting; this hope that the year ahead of us will be one of the most successful ever celebrated by our great organization — the Boy Scouts of America.