

Saturday, February 10, 1934

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Addresses the Boy Scouts of America

Introduction

President Roosevelt, speaking over a national hookup, asked for the cooperation of the Boy Scouts of America in waging a drive for the needy of the United States. He asked that Boy Scout troops collect household furnishings, bedding and clothes for distribution among the suffering of the country.

Prior to the president's address, scout leaders throughout the nation had been furnished with sealed instructions as to how the scouts are to work. The nature of these instructions were kept secret until the president's speech.

Full Text of Speech

I am happy to participate in the twenty-fourth anniversary celebration of our organization, the Boy Scouts of America. Nearly a million of us are mobilized at this time in all parts of the country as a part of the program for this week of celebration. Home and farm patrols and troops of farm boys are joining with their brother scouts in the big cities.

In front of the city hall in San Francisco, and it is 9 o'clock in the morning there, thousands of scouts join with other thousands in the Hippodrome in New York in carrying on the cause of worldwide brotherhood in scouting.

As most of you know, scouting has been one of my active interests of many years. I have visited hundreds of troops in their home towns and in their camps. I know, therefore, from personal experience the things we do and stand for as scouts. We have ideals. We are a growing organization. We believe that we are accomplishing fine American results not only for our own membership, but also for our families, our communities and our nation.

Summed up in one sentence, the aim of scouting is to build up better citizenship. I believe that we are contributing greatly to that objective.

I am especially ahppy today to extend personal greetings and congratulations to the scouts and leaders who have earned the president's award for progress in the year 1933, as a part of the ten-year program. It is appropriate that we are planning for the celebration of our silver jubilee, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America, which will culminate in a great national jamboree here in the nation's capital in the summer of 1935. Of course, it would be physically impossible for us to have the whole membership of the Boy Scouts of America, a million strong, come to Washington at one time, but I much hope that it will be possible to have every nook and cranny of our nation represented.

As a preliminary to our silver jubilee, and in line with the emphasis of service for others which we have always stressed, I suggest to you that it is time once more for us to do a national good turn.

As many of you know, we are doing everything possible in this emergency to help suffering humanity. I called upon the federal emergency relief administrator, Mr. Harry L. Hopkins, to tell me what kind of a national good turn would be of the greatest service. He has recommended that during the balance of the month of February every troop and every scout do everything possible in their separate localities to collect such household furnishings, bedding and clothes, as people may be able to share as gifts to those who greatly need them.

Therefore, I ask you, under the direction of our own local officers, and in conference with the representatives of the federal relief administration and other local social agencies, to gather up such of this material as may be available for distribution.

I am confident that the American people will generously cooperate and respond. Indeed, I am hoping that in many cases they will telephone or send letters to the local scout offices to offer their help to carry through this national good turn.

Already I have received offers of cooperation from governors of states, from mayors and other community leaders. May you carry out this new service and rededicate yourselves to the scout oath.

I ask you to join with me and the eagle scouts and our president and chief scout executive who are here with me in the White House in giving again the scout oath.

All stand.

Give the scout sign.

Repeat with the 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."

References

February 15, 1934

American Falls Press

Coming Soon:

Lost in the Ether

Long-Forgotten Radio Speeches of the 20s and 30s

Look for it at: <http://www.cafepress.com/sheeppee>

Researched by Vicki Robison

Blog: <http://sheeppee.wordpress.com/>