

Forward on Liberty's Team

Four decades have now passed since Iowa and the Boy Scouts of America joined hands in a program of mutual aid and benefit. The enriched lives of thousands of Iowa youths speak well for one side of that bargain, namely the Scouting program within the state itself. But there is another side to this story — Iowa's leadership in its own region and in the nation.

Back in the days of regional senior Scouting events, Iowa was host to all of Region Eight at an Annual Sea Scout Regatta held at Lake Okoboji, and for the Mississippi River cruises conducted between Keokuk and Dubuque. Iowa Councils also started a pattern for other states when they began participating yearly in the Iowa State Teachers conventions. Still another contribution is the "Iowa Plan" of Scout cooperation with the American Legion which is now being promoted on a nationwide basis among the other state Legion departments.

Today Iowa Scouts have, in addition to their local activities, camping facilities in each Council area. Three of these are located on lakes and six on rivers, while six camps have their own swimming pools. Although most of the camping is done

in summer months, the camps are often in year-round use.

Pilgrimages to historic spots in Iowa are a continuing activity, with old Fort Atkinson, the Mormon Trail at Garden Grove, and the Herbert Hoover Birthplace at West Branch among the most popular shrines. Iowa Scouts also have journeyed to Springfield, Illinois, to make the same twenty-two mile hike which Lincoln made over a century ago between the Illinois capital and New Salem.

The national Scout Jamborees afford Iowa youngsters an opportunity to meet with Scouts from all over the United States in surroundings conducive to fellowship and inspirational leadership. During the summer of 1953 some one thousand Iowa Scouts will journey to Santa Ana, California, for their annual Scout meeting.

In addition to the recreational aspects of Scouting, the movement has sponsored a program of service which began with Scouting itself. During World War I Scouts assisted in the sale of Liberty Loan bonds and war stamps, collected lumber for use in trenches, gathered material for gas mask canisters, participated in food and fuel drives, and rendered valuable service to the nation in numerous other ways which drew high praise from President Woodrow Wilson. From Pearl Harbor on through V-J Day, the Boy Scouts helped the nation on to victory. General Dwight D. Eisen-

hower encouraged the Scouts in their paper salvage campaign, and was in turn awarded a gold medal from the Boy Scouts of America in appreciation of his recognition of their work. Twenty thousand Scouts earned the General Douglas MacArthur medal for growing food. The Army Air Force cooperated with the Air Scouts in devising a training program which materially assisted the air arm of our national defense.

Immediately after World War II ended, the Scouts established a World Friendship Fund, which has been used to offer aid to war-devastated areas. Ten thousand dollars has already been sent to the Philippine Republic for scholarships, professional advisors, and the distribution of literature.

Thus have the Boy Scouts worked and played, in Iowa, in America, and beyond our borders, whenever the need and opportunity permitted. Scouting has been called the greatest youth movement in history — it is unquestionably the largest and finest youth program in the world today.

Whether there is war or peace — prosperity or depression — the Boy Scouts of America stand ready to render unselfish service. The Boy Scout movement is for all boys regardless of race, creed, color, or economic level. Catholic, Jew, and Protestant find self-respect, tolerance, patriotism, and reverence as a part of the fundamental lessons of Scouting.

The Scouting program stimulates a boy's interest, encourages his self-development, and directs his attention to a wide range of hobbies, vocations, and professions. Scouting is a long-term program, providing continuous and progressive training for a boy, making him "physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight" as he advances to manhood. Moreover, the Scouting program strengthens not only the youth himself, but his home, the community, the state, and the nation. It develops loyalty, promotes brotherhood, and inspires patriotism.

Rather than being an entity to itself, Scouting provides a program for various organizations to use in the training of youth in which they are interested. Thus, Cub Packs, Scout Troops, and Explorer Posts are sponsored by churches, civic groups, and similar organizations. The strength of the movement is the devoted volunteer leadership, trained for its responsibility. In fact, leadership training is one of the major responsibilities of the local council.

Just prior to the recent national election, the Boy Scouts of America conducted a great non-partisan "Get Out The Vote Campaign." Most of the 2,000,000 Scouts were active in calling upon nearly 30,000,000 homes throughout the United States. On each front door knob they left an attractive Liberty Bell urging the citizens to vote. "Vote As You Think, Think When You Vote."

Whether it be in a great national campaign, a national, state, or local jamboree, a matter of community service, or the development of character in the youth himself, the Boy Scouts of America can be depended upon for leadership. Thus it is on a national scale, and thus it is in our own Iowa. From East to West, and from North to South, in each of the Scout Area Councils of Iowa the Boy Scouts are steadily marching as their slogan proclaims, "Forward on Liberty's Team."

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