

SPEECH BY

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BOY SCOUT EXECUTIVES
FORT BRAGG
JANUARY 22, 1973

LET ME THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING ME TO BE WITH YOU TONIGHT AND GIVING ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH SUCH A DISTINGUISHED GROUP OF CIVIC LEADERS. AS SOME OF YOU KNOW, MY INTEREST IN THE SCOUTING PROGRAM OF THIS AREA GOES BACK A LONG WAY AND THOUGH I DO NOT HAVE TIME NOW FOR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION, I CONTINUE TO FOLLOW WITH INTEREST THE PROGRESS OF SCOUTING.

THE OCCONEECHEE COUNCIL IS AS YOU ALL KNOW ONE OF THE MOST OUTSTANDING IN THE COUNTRY. MANY PROFESSIONAL SCOUTING EXECUTIVES HAVE BEGUN THEIR CAREERS HERE WITH US AND THEN MOVED ON TO HEAD OTHER COUNCILS OR TO IMPORTANT POSITIONS WITH THE NATIONAL STAFF. IT IS EASY TO SEE WHY WHEN ONE LOOKS AT THE SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES WE FIND HERE IN THE OCCONEECHEE COUNCIL. OUR SCOUT-O-RAMA IS ONE OF THE GREATEST ANYWHERE AND DRAWS SOME 25,000 SPECTATORS TO OBSERVE THE WORK OF SOME 7,500 CUBS, SCOUTS, EXPLORERS AND LEADERS.

SINCE 1969 MEMBERSHIP TO THE COUNCIL HAS INCREASED BY MORE THAN 14% GROWING FROM 17,609 TO 20,104 BOYS. FOR THE 3RD STRAIGHT YEAR, THE OCCONEECHEE COUNCIL WILL RECEIVE THE SPENCER AWARD IN RECOGNITION OF THE COUNCIL HAVING ACHIEVED ITS NATIONAL PRESCRIBED GOALS.

THOUGH THERE IS MUCH STILL TO BE DONE, I AM PROUD OF WHAT HAS BEEN DONE. I AM PROUD OF THE INITIATIVE SHOWN BY OUR SCOUTING LEADERS IN WORKING WITH THE HANDICAPPED AND DISADVANTAGED IN WHOM I ALSO HAVE A VERY SPECIAL INTEREST. MORE THAN 50 UNITS REACH OUT TO THESE BOYS AND PROVIDE FOR THEM SPECIAL HELP AND INFLUENCE ON THEIR LIVES. I AM PROUD OF THE THOUSANDS OF OUR BEST CITIZENS WHO LIKE YOU HERE TONIGHT SERVE AS VOLUNTEER LEADERS IN THE FINEST CITIZENSHIP TRAINING MOVEMENT EVER DEVELOPED IN OUR COUNTRY. SCOUTING IS THE ONE YOUTH PROGRAM WHICH USES LOCAL EXISTING FACILITIES AND LEADERSHIP AND CAN BE TAKEN TO BOYS AND GIRLS ANY PLACE AND ANY TIME. ITS HIGHEST GOAL IS THAT OF SERVING ALL THE PEOPLE AND I KNOW YOU ARE HELPING PUSH SCOUTING TOWARDS THAT GOAL.

AS SCOUTING LEADERS YOU ARE ACTIVE MEMBERS OF A PARTNERSHIP FORMED BETWEEN THE OFFICIAL SCOUTING ORGANIZATION AND AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS, BUSINESSES, AND INDUSTRIES. YOU HAVE INVOLVED YOURSELVES IN ONE OF THE MOST COMMENDABLE ACTIVITIES I CAN IMAGINE AND BY DOING SO, YOU ARE MAINTAINING THE STRENGTH AND DURABILITY OF OUR AMERICAN SOCIETY.

YOU KNOW WE HEAR A LOT TODAY FROM YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT INVOLVEMENT. UNFORTUNATELY, SOME SEEM TO THINK THAT INVOLVEMENT IS SOMETHING THEY THOUGHT UP ALL BY THEMSELVES.

THEY TALK ABOUT GETTING INVOLVED IN SOLVING THE PROBLEMS OF MANKIND, ABOUT LOVING ONE ANOTHER, AND ABOUT SHARING WHAT WE HAVE WITH OTHERS. AND, OF COURSE, THEY ARE RIGHT. WE SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN SOLVING THE PROBLEMS OF MANKIND; WE SHOULD LOVE ONE ANOTHER; AND WE SHOULD SHARE WHAT WE HAVE WITH OTHERS WHO ARE LESS FORTUNATE THAN WE.

UNFORTUNATELY, THIS PLEA FOR INVOLVEMENT QUITE OFTEN TURNS INTO A DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENTAL ACTION. TODAY, GETTING INVOLVED SEEMS TO MEAN GETTING THE GOVERNMENT TO ACT, AND MOST OF US HAVE GROWN SO USED TO HAVING THE GOVERNMENT SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS FOR US THAT THIS DEMAND FOR GREATER GOVERNMENTAL INTERVENTION INTO OUR DAILY LIVES EVEN SEEMS NATURAL.

WE EXPECT THE GOVERNMENT TO EDUCATE OUR CHILDREN. WE WANT THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE CARE OF OUR SICK AND OUR OLD PEOPLE. WE WANT THE GOVERNMENT TO CLEAN UP OUR AIR AND OUR WATER. WE WANT THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE CARE OF OUR POOR, MAKE OUR MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION SAFE AND EFFICIENT, AND DEFEND US FROM OUR FOREIGN ENEMIES AND OUR CRIMINALS. AND WE WANT THE GOVERNMENT TO DO THESE THINGS WITHOUT MAKING US GIVE UP ANYTHING OF OUR OWN.

BUT THE WISE FOUNDING FATHERS OF OUR LAND KNEW BETTER. THEY UNDERSTOOD THAT A WORKABLE DEMOCRACY REQUIRES NOT ONLY CHECKS AND BALANCES WITHIN OUR GOVERNMENT BUT INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY ON THE PART OF CITIZENS. IN WRITING OUR CONSTITUTION, THE FOUNDING FATHERS DELIBERATELY WROTE CHECKS AND BALANCES INTO THE SYSTEM AND BY TRYING TO LIMIT THE GOVERNMENT'S AUTHORITY TO ONLY THOSE

THINGS MENTIONED IN THE CONSTITUTION, OUR FOUNDING FATHERS TRIED TO FORCE CITIZENS TO BE RESPONSIBLE HUMAN BEINGS.

IN BUILDING OUR GOVERNMENT IN THIS WAY, OUR FOUNDING FATHERS MADE A PLACE FOR INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY IN OUR SOCIETY, AND OUR GOVERNMENT HAS CONTINUALLY ENCOURAGED INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WELFARE OF SOCIETY BY TREATING IN A SPECIAL WAY NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS THAT DEVOTE THEIR TIME AND MONEY TO CHARITY.

BUT WHAT IS INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WELFARE OF SOCIETY IF IT IS NOT INVOLVEMENT IN THE CONCERNS OF OTHERS? WHAT MORE CAN INVOLVEMENT BE? WHEN ONE PERSON VOLUNTARILY GIVES UP SOME OF HIS TIME OR CONTRIBUTES SOME OF HIS MONEY FOR THE BENEFIT OF OTHERS LESS FORTUNATE THAN HE, HE IS BEING INVOLVED. SUCH A PERSON IS MORE INVOLVED IN THE CONCERNS OF OTHERS, IN MY OPINION, THAN SOMEONE WHO DEVOTES HIS TIME TO GENERATING GOVERNMENTAL ACTION. FOR CHARITABLE WORK, ESPECIALLY WHEN SOMEONE DEVOTES HIS TIME AND ENERGY TO IT, IS MORE PERSONAL. SUCH WORK PUTS PEOPLE IN TOUCH WITH EACH OTHER. SUCH WORK DIRECTLY INVOLVES PEOPLE WITH THE CONCERNS OF OTHER PEOPLE.

YOU KNOW WHAT I AM TALKING ABOUT BECAUSE YOU ARE DOING RIGHT NOW EXACTLY WHAT I AM DESCRIBING. HOW MUCH MORE "INVOLVED" CAN ONE GET THAN WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN A RELATIONSHIP SO CLOSE AND SO PERSONAL THAT IT IS SURE TO MAKE A LASTING IMPRESSION ON THEIR LIVES? HOW MUCH MORE INVOLVED CAN ONE BE THAN ASSUMING INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR MOTIVATING YOUNG MEN TO BE MORE PRODUCTIVE AND USEFUL; THAN INSTILLING PATRIOTISM

AND A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY; THAN TEACHING AN APPRECIATION OF HERITAGE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM; THAN TEACHING BOYS HOW TO WORK AND GET ALONG WITH PEOPLE AND HOW TO LEAD? IN MY MIND IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR ANYONE TO BE MORE "INVOLVED" THAN THIS.

BUT SUPPOSE INSTEAD OF THIS KIND OF INDIVIDUAL AND PRIVATE INITIATIVE - - - OR USE THE WORD "INVOLVEMENT" AGAIN IF YOU WISH ----- SUPPOSE INSTEAD YOU HAD ONLY GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS TO PROVIDE FOR EVERY NEED AND TO SOLVE EVERY HUMAN PROBLEM. WHAT KIND OF SITUATION WOULD WE HAVE? I NEED NOT TELL YOU THAT, GOVERNMENTAL BUREAUCRACY TENDS TO BE IMPERSONAL. ALTHOUGH IT ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE PEOPLE'S PROBLEMS, IT TOO OFTEN ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THEM IN AN IMPERSONAL WAY. SO IN A SOCIALIST SOCIETY, THERE IS NO PLACE FOR INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONCERNS OF OTHERS SUCH AS YOU EXHIBIT HERE TONIGHT. IN A SOCIALIST SOCIETY THERE IS NO WAY FOR PEOPLE TO BECOME INVOLVED AS YOU ARE. IN SUCH A SOCIETY, EACH PERSON MERELY WORKS.

HE DOES NOT NEED TO CONCERN HIMSELF WITH THE WELFARE OF OTHERS, OR EVEN, FOR THAT MATTER, HIS OWN FOR THAT IS THE GOVERNMENT'S JOB. IN A TRULY DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY, ON THE OTHER HAND, IT IS PEOPLE WHO CARE FOR PEOPLE. A TRULY DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY IS NOT MERELY A GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE, AND FOR THE PEOPLE, BUT IT IS A SOCIETY OF THE PEOPLE, BY THE PEOPLE, AND FOR THE PEOPLE. IN A TRULY DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY, EVERYONE'S WELFARE IS EVERYONE'S PERSONAL CONCERN, AND THIS PERSONAL CONCERN IS A DEFINITION OF INVOLVEMENT.

AS OUR NATIONAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS HAVE GROWN LARGER AND LARGER, THEY HAVE TAKEN OVER MANY OF THE SOCIAL ROLES PEOPLE USED TO PLAY. LARGER AND LARGER GOVERNMENTS HAVE MADE SOCIETY LESS AND LESS PERSONAL. PEOPLE NO LONGER TEND TO GET INVOLVED; THEY ARE QUITE OFTEN AFRAID TO GET INVOLVED, FOR THEY DO NOT WANT TO GET CAUGHT UP IN THE IMPERSONAL RED-TAPE OF GOVERNMENTAL BUREAUCRACIES. THEY REALIZE THAT OUR SOCIETY HAS ALREADY GROWN TOO IMPERSONAL AND THAT IF THIS TENDENCY CONTINUES; IT WILL DESTROY THE HUMANISM THAT OUR SOCIETY STILL CONTAINS. SO WE MUST MAKE OUR PEOPLE REALIZE THAT MAKING OUR SOCIETY MORE HELPFUL REQUIRES THAT MORE INDIVIDUALS DIRECTLY INVOLVE THEMSELVES IN THE TASK OF HELPING OTHERS.

WE HAVE MADE A GOOD START TOWARD HELPING OUR PEOPLE HERE IN THIS COUNCIL REACH THIS UNDERSTANDING. WE HAVE 560 CHURCHES, CIVIC GROUPS, EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, VETERAN'S GROUPS, BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIAL FIRMS CHARTERED TO USE THE SCOUTING PROGRAM. WE HAVE 900 CUB PACKS, SCOUT TROOPS AND EXPLORER POSTS INVOLVING MORE THAN 20,000 BOYS BETWEEN THE AGES OF EIGHT AND SEVENTEEN YEARS OF AGE. AND YOU HERE TONIGHT ARE A PART OF SOME 7,500 ADULT VOLUNTEERS, ASSISTED BY TWENTY FULL-TIME SCOUT LEADERS WHO HAVE INVOLVED YOURSELVES IN THE MOLDING THE LIVES OF THE YOUNG MEN OF THE OCCONEECHEE COUNCIL. THIS IS INVOLVEMENT AND, AS YOU CAN SEE "INVOLVEMENT" IS NOT A RECENT INVENTION REGARDLESS OF WHAT THOSE SAY WHO WOULD LIKE FOR US TO BELIEVE THEY COINED THE WORD.

IT IS IN FACT A FUNDAMENTAL INGREDIENT IN OUR AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE. SO BY PARTICIPATING IN THE SCOUTING PROGRAM OF THE OCCONEECHEE COUNCIL YOU ARE CARRYING ON A GREAT TRADITION OF THIS NATION; YOU ARE HELPING DEVELOP A GREAT RESOURCE OF THIS NATION; WHEN ALL IS SAID AND DONE YOU ARE HELPING PRESERVE THIS NATION.

SO I COME BEFORE YOU TONIGHT TO HONOR YOU FOR YOUR INVOLVEMENT AND HOPEFULLY TO ENCOURAGE YOU IN YOUR EFFORTS. WE MUST BEGIN AGAIN TO DEPEND MORE UPON PERSONAL AND INDIVIDUAL RESOURCES AND LESS UPON GOVERNMENT AS THE ALPHA AND OMEGA FOR ALL OUR NEEDS. WE MUST DEVELOP AMONG ALL PEOPLE TRUE HUMAN CONCERN AND PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT. I KNOW OF NO BETTER EXAMPLE OF HOW THIS CAN BE DONE THAN THE SCOUTING PROGRAM OF THIS COUNCIL. THANK YOU SO VERY MUCH FOR CONTRIBUTING YOUR TIME AND PERSONAL RESOURCES AND FOR DEMONSTRATING IN SUCH AN IMPRESSIVE WAY THE MEANING OF THE WORD " INVOLVEMENT " IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY.