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STUDIES IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

A Study in Public Relations.
By Harold P. Levy.

Case History of the Relations Maintained Between a Department of Public Assistance and the People of a State.

Building a Popular Movement.
By Harold P. Levy.

A Case Study of the Public Relations of the Boy Scouts of America.

Other titles in preparation.

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RUSSELL SAGE FOUNDATION

BUILDING A POPULAR MOVEMENT

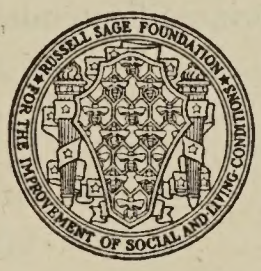
A Case Study of the Public Relations of the Boy Scouts of America

By

HAROLD P. LEVY, Research Associate

With an Introduction by

MARY SWAIN ROUTZAHN, Director
Department of Social Work Interpretation
Russell Sage Foundation



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INTRODUCTION

THE CASE STUDY presented here describes the public relations of the Boy Scouts of America. It takes its place as the second in a series projected by the Department of Social Work Interpretation of the Russell Sage Foundation to tell how the public relations job is done in actual situations. Much has been written about the techniques of publicity and interpretation. A number of books, some of major importance, describe and define good public relations and discuss ways to maintain them. This series offers an opportunity to consider how agencies of different types and sizes manage the public relations responsibility; in other words, it offers an opportunity to observe the application of principles and techniques in specific instances. Thus, planners and practitioners in public relations are provided a useful testing ground.

Uses of Case Studies

Before suggesting possible uses which may be made of this study of the Boy Scouts of America, perhaps we should make clear that there are certain things it does not attempt. First, it is not an analysis prepared at the request, or primarily for the use, of the agency studied. The Boy Scouts of America asked neither for an analysis nor an appraisal of its public relations program. Instead, the scout administration agreed to our own request that the study might be made, and co-operated wholeheartedly with the full understanding that we were free to present the program as we

saw it. Second, the choice of this agency, or any other, for study does not imply that we offer a model to be copied by others.

In selecting the Boy Scouts of America for study, we possibly have gone to an extreme in presenting a public relations pattern most difficult, if not impossible, of imitation. While readers may find devices here that can be applied to their own problems, this report offers in the main certain leads, or perhaps stimuli, to self-analysis.

The combination of attributes for popular understanding of scouting is too closely bound up with the distinct program and policies of the agency itself to be widely usable by others. It should be borne in mind that the scout movement is free of many complications that beset countless agencies in the welfare field, both in program and in interpretation.

For example, the purposes of the Boy Scouts of America have been easily defined, and even its methods are readily understood by the average layman. On the other hand many agencies deal with problems that the layman finds remote and of little direct concern to himself. The use of the volunteer brings the scouting organization closer to the public than is possible where the work of an agency is too technical to be undertaken by volunteers. In contrast to the single purpose of the Boy Scout program, many organizations are complex, departmentalized, and varied, both in program and in procedure. An agency may have as the only common denominator of its departments an intangible thing like a religious motivation or the serving of democratic ideals. Yet, examination of a pattern such as the one presented in

this book may suggest ways to simplify certain complexities, add personality to intangibles, or achieve other ends that will improve public relations.

In other words, the result of examining another agency's work is essentially a stimulating process leading the reader to take a fresh look at his own program. The familiar exclamation: "That gives me an idea!" often applies not to something to be borrowed as it stands, but rather to the original idea which comes from looking at his own problem in a new way. Such is the kind of help that we hope these case studies may provide.

The third point we wish to keep clearly before readers is the objectivity of these studies. Our aim throughout is to maintain the role of observers and reporters, rather than commentators or critics. As will be mentioned or implied at various points in subsequent chapters, no part of this story is intended to appraise, to commend, or to dispute the group-work practices of the scouting organization. However, it may be said that agencies selected for these studies are well known and generally recognized and supported because they are considered to perform useful services in their communities.

Contrasts Between Case Studies

Many contrasts may be drawn between this report and the case study previously published,[1] both in respect to situations which the agencies concerned have to meet and in methods followed in each in-

[1] Levy, Harold P., A Study in Public Relations: Case History of the Relations Maintained Between a Department of Public Assistance and the People of a State. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1943.

stance. Such points of difference serve not only to highlight variations in two studies focused on the same general subject, but suggest how greatly the public relations processes may be affected by the nature of an agency's program and the special problems encountered in its field of operation.

For example, the Pennsylvania Department of Public Assistance, the subject of the first volume, functions on a state level. Although concerned with nationally sponsored assistance programs, its relations with the people of the state are influenced only moderately in this respect. Again, the Department maintains a network of county units, but has provided only limited service to those local offices in helping interpret their day-by-day work to the people. The Boy Scouts of America, on the other hand, is a closely knit national movement with a clearly defined pattern which repeats itself with only minor variations in each community where Boy Scout troops exist. The story that follows, therefore, deals at some length with the relations between the national organization and the citizen in the locality.

Second, the chief concern of the Public Relations Division in the Pennsylvania Department of Public Assistance has been with such prevalent attitudes toward relief as suspicion, indifference, or open antagonism. Quite the opposite is true of scouting, for the Boy Scout movement has carried on almost from the beginning in an atmosphere of widespread approval.

A third important difference in the content of the two studies grows out of the fact that scouting is a popular movement in the sense of its being known to the people at large. Further, the Pennsylvania agency

is a unit of government, while the Boy Scouts of America is not only a voluntary movement but one in which a large part of the program depends upon volunteers. To a much greater degree, members of its public and participants are the same persons.

In addition to these and other contrasting elements in the two agencies so far studied, there also are marked differences in the vantage points from which the public relations analyses are made. The present study focuses attention on characteristics of the scout movement that contribute to public understanding and approval and on over-all operations of the agency which help to build goodwill, with activities of the Public Relations Service, as a staff unit, being subordinated. The first case study, on the other hand, centered upon the public relations planning that attended virtually every phase of agency operation and reported the activities of Public Relations Division not only in the preparation and release of informational materials, but in respect to policies and procedures and public relations guidance to the whole staff.

Other reports to be added to this series are planned to present problems and public relations methods of still different types and to approach the general subject from other points of view.

Specific Groups of Readers

The intention in these reports has been to establish certain specific points for several special groups. For example, it is hoped that agency executives and those boards or committees which govern agency policies will be reminded by this study and others in the

series that public relations is a responsible task—one that does not take care of itself, but must be planned in relation to particular agency needs and purposes. We wish this reminder could go especially to agencies which have lived too long on borrowed goodwill—goodwill which comes from membership in a community fund or from the fact that they serve children, old people, or others toward whom people feel a natural sympathy.

Again, case studies such as this series offers are useful in providing classroom materials in schools of social work, especially for courses which deal with administrative procedures, community organization, or problems of interpretation in day-to-day social services. The need for such reference material has long been felt, not only in classes where public relations comprises but one aspect of a broad subject, but also in the few special courses now being given in interpretation and public relations. A case study centering on the subject of public relations gives reality to a matter that otherwise may seem quite remote to students.

Another public we have in mind is made up of public relations practitioners who always are glad to hear how the other person does his job. As a general rule, the reader in this group recognizes that each job represents a special problem and that no set of techniques or ideas can be put to work in every situation with equal effectiveness. But he is just as likely to know that ideas beget ideas and that he may profitably study a pattern such as any one presented in this series.

Beyond the desire to provide useful reference mate-

rial for planners and students in the field of public relations is the fact that the entire series forms part of a broader project envisioned by the Department of Social Work Interpretation. And this might be defined as an effort to stabilize public relations as a function in social work, health, and educational activities.

Public relations work is widely accepted as an essential accompaniment to any public service. So far, however, many agencies are unable or reluctant to seek funds to provide for necessary staffs and materials. Therefore, progress in developing specialists qualified to direct public relations activities is slower than it should be. Specific training to prepare workers in this field is unavailable in schools and colleges and opportunities are few to learn public relations on the job. While demand for qualified workers at present exceeds the supply, positions are so scattered and varied in their requirements that they offer little encouragement to persons with abilities in this area to choose public relations as a profession.

If these studies lead a few more agencies to set up programs of public relations, planned to meet their own special requirements, we may have taken one forward step toward stabilization of the public relations job.

This study and the one previously published have been prepared and written by Harold P. Levy, research associate for the past five years in the Department of Social Work Interpretation. Mr. Levy also has made studies of eight other agencies, and though they have not been published, all provided useful background material for these books. Before

coming to this Department Mr. Levy devoted more than nine years to newspaper work as reporter and editor, and four years as publicity director for the National Conference of Social Work.

A procedure which we found very useful was to circulate in advance, among persons with some special qualification as critics, a detailed outline of the material to be covered in the report. Some of our critics also read and commented on the manuscript as a whole.

For their willing and valuable co-operation, we are greatly indebted to many executives and staff members of the Boy Scouts of America, both in the national office and in local councils. We particularly wish to thank E. Urner Goodman, director of the Division of Program; Leslie C. Stratton, national director of Public Relations; Lorne W. Barclay, director of the Editorial Service; David R. Martin, Jr., formerly assistant director of Publications; and Charles E. Hendry, director of the Research and Statistical Service, who not only gave several interviews, but helped to arrange interviews with other members of the scouting organization, provided documentary materials, and carefully reviewed various parts of the manuscript in its preliminary form. Our appreciation also is extended to James E. West, who served as the first chief scout executive for thirty-three years, and to Elbert K. Fretwell, who succeeded him in 1943. No responsibility, however, is assumed by members of the organization for the study. Parts of this study centered in three local scout councils in widely separated communities. While these councils are not identified in the story that follows, we are no less

grateful for the helpful assistance received in each instance.

In addition to those already mentioned, several other persons reviewed the manuscript shortly before publication, and their comments and criticisms proved invaluable. We desire to express thanks especially to Par Danforth, formerly assistant director of Public Relations of the Boy Scouts of America, and now associate secretary, The American Friends Service Committee; Ruth A. Lerrigo, editor, Community Chests and Councils, Inc.; W. T. McCullough, research secretary, The Welfare Federation of Cleveland; and Russell H. Kurtz, editor, Social Work Year Book.

March 16, 1944 — Mary Swain Routzahn

CHAPTER I

THE MAKING OF A POPULAR MOVEMENT

BOY SCOUTING as an idea penetrated the United States early in the present century, at a time when influential public opinion was cordially receptive to such a new and hopeful plan. It was a period when the frontiers of this pioneer nation were vanishing. Cities flourished and grew, and the rural scene gradually narrowed.[1] Large segments of the people expressed, or felt, a restive nostalgia for the old life of the outdoors. Many persons believed that the American character, particularly that of the youth of the nation, was deteriorating in the restrictive surroundings of the city, and the term *character-building* crept into popular and meaningful use.

Ernest Thompson Seton, the naturalist-writer, who was one of the originators of the Boy Scout movement in America, appraised the resurgent interest in outdoor activities as a hopeful sign for a nation that had moved too far for its own good from the simple life of primitive times. One of his books, appearing in 1912, stressed this point of view.[2]

As expressions of the sort of public opinion that helped to set the stage for the Boy Scout movement, the observations by Seton are worthy of further consideration. In an analysis of the need for scouting, published two years earlier, he drew a sad contrast between New England factory workers of the 1900's

[1] In 1800 only 6.1 per cent of the population of the United States was urban; fifty years later, in 1850, 15.3; in 1900, 40; and in 1920, 51.4.

[2] The Book of Woodcraft and Indian Lore. Constable and Company, Ltd., London, 1912, p. 3.

who, said Seton, "fairly represent the average population" and the virile "fighting farmers of the Revolution" who had relied mainly upon their out-of-door training in their relentless physical struggle for American independence. He held that, in contrast to the Revolutionary patriots, the "typical" workers of his own day had "deteriorated in all ways. They seem to have gained nothing but a little scholarship and a knowledge of city amusements." It was "the testimony of most observers," he wrote, that the nation was experiencing a general decline and "the old life is no longer available to end this unfortunate grade."

"This," he declared, "is where the plan of the Boy Scouts comes in. My plan, begun in 1900, aimed to teach woodcraft, scouting, starcraft, riding, outdoor athletics, camping, signalling, hunting, trailing, etc., as a *means of character-building*, and in the hope that these would again become the pursuits of the people. . . ."[1]

Other spokesmen and writers were in agreement. A contemporary leader in the field of public recreation blamed the "unnatural environment" of the city for breeding idleness, weakness, and delinquency in the boy and considered that scouting offered the romantic opportunity "to return to nature and original conditions, to hunt and fish, to build your own house in the woods, and sit around your own camp fire."[2] A clergyman saw scouting as "meeting a real need in the boy life of our land."[3] And still others stressed

[1] Seton, Ernest Thompson, in Applied Ideals in Work with Boys. Young Men's Christian Association Press, New York, 1910, pp. 171–178.

[2] Curtis, Henry S., The Play Movement and Its Significance. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1917, p. 251.

[3] Cavert, the Rev. W. D., Our Boys and the Boy Scout Movement. Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1919. (First delivered as a sermon in the First Presbyterian Church, Stamford, N. Y., on February 8, 1918.)

the deleterious effects of urban life and industrialization and urged the necessity for some movement that would combat such evils through a character-building program appealing to the "red-blooded" boy.[1]

Making the Most of Timeliness

That the people were ready to accept boy scouting was made strikingly clear by the spontaneous growth of scout organizations and scout troops during the first dozen years of the present century when not one, but a number of groups sprang up under a variety of auspices. Some were national in scope, some statewide, and others purely local. One among them, the Boy Scouts of America, though not the first, was destined by the combination of circumstances which form the basis of this study, to outlive all of the others, to become *the* Boy Scout movement, and to prosper in size and influence.

The general model for all, as well as the inspiration for the term *scouting*, came directly from England and indirectly, in part, from ideas of two outdoorsmen in America: Seton and Daniel Carter Beard. It happened this way. Lord Baden-Powell (then Lieut. Gen. Sir Robert), upon returning to his homeland after the Boer War, felt a pressing concern over the welfare of the character and health of British boys. Army experience in South Africa had convinced him that the ordinary British recruit seriously lacked the self-reliance and physical stamina needed in rigorous campaigning—and he laid this condition in large measure

[1] See Richardson, Norman E. and Loomis, Ormond E., The Boy Scout Movement Applied by the Church. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York 1915, p. 38.

to youths' lost opportunity to engage in "normal" outdoor activities. Much like many men in this country, he believed the restrictions of modern civilization were demoralizing. Already the author of three training books for soldiers, Baden-Powell wrote a handbook, Scouting for Boys, which formalized a plan for a character-building movement and, coming from the hand of a military hero, found an immediate audience in this country, as well as in Britain, when published in 1903. In 1908 Baden-Powell formally established the British Boy Scout movement. It is significant that both his book and plan of organization borrowed liberally from several sources, especially from the two foremost out-of-door movements of the time for boys —Seton's Woodcraft Indians, started in 1902, and Beard's Sons of Daniel Boone, begun in 1905.

In any case, the immediate success of the movement overseas set scouting afoot in the United States. Soon the strength of the Boy Scouts of America was fully revealed, for within its first year of life this organization succeeded in absorbing every other active boy scout group in the nation but one—the American Boy Scouts which, though a formidable competitor, also passed from existence before 1920.[1]

Whether boy scouting in the United States actually developed out of the needs as expressed above or whether that particular plan for the training and entertainment of youngsters happened along at the moment when people were favorably disposed, its appearance proved to be an event of great timeliness. And to any plan, organization, or movement that de-

[1] In the interval the American Boy Scouts changed its name to the United States Boy Scouts.

pends upon popular acceptance, few considerations are more important than timing, than coinciding with public interest.

Simply to have arrived on the scene was scarcely enough to assure success, however. Even if the Boy Scout program had been introduced under the egis of a single group or of one organization, it was, irrespective of all the circumstances in its favor, new, unknown, and barely full-formed. The people in general, and the members and potential members in particular, would have to be apprised of it. They would have to know, to understand, and to accept it before scouting could gain in popularity. In terms of public understanding the situation was complicated, of course, by the multiplicity of organizations similar in nature that sprouted up about the country. The Boy Scouts of America, born February 8, 1910, proceeded at once, therefore, to make the most of timeliness by utilizing and capitalizing upon elements that made for popular appeal.

What, then, were its initial assets?

First, the Boy Scouts of America clothed its program with romance. Responding to the longing for the out-of-doors which was on the public consciousness, and borrowing from the British Boy Scout movement, it stressed such romantic activities as camping, outdoor cookery, trail-blazing, and scouting in woods and fields, and added dash and color with distinctive symbols and insignia conferred for proficiency in pursuits of this sort.

Second, it emphasized the qualities of good citizenship. To this end, a code of conduct for boys was formulated which, in well-turned and repeatable lan-

guage, taught and honored concepts such as trustworthiness, helpfulness, courtesy, thrift, cleanliness, and reverence.

Third, it adopted a point of view attuned to a democratically minded citizenry and opened its ranks freely to all creeds, races, and classes. Furthermore, in a country that was stanchly disposed toward peace, it took a position opposite that of competitive organizations of the period, rejected militarism and military training, and championed what it called *peace-scouting*.

Fourth, it drew for leadership upon men of national standing in business and industry, in public affairs, in letters, in natural science, and to a certain extent in social work. Such leadership proved from the outset to be of inestimable advantage in prestige and influence.

Fifth, its leadership immediately assumed an aggressive attitude which has continued as one of the movement's most distinguishing and fruitful attributes. The Boy Scouts of America set forth with the idea of advancing scouting to a place of national significance—and proceeded to achieve that goal.

Holding Public Interest

These assets as applied served to hold public interest during the formative years of the movement, which also included some of its stormiest, and enabled the Boy Scouts of America to emerge from its first decade as an established institution.

Indeed, the Boy Scouts of America soon was able to minimize itself as an *organization* in order to em-

phasize boy scouting as a movement. Meanwhile, the range of scouting itself continued to be broadened. Though the original minimum age of twelve always has been retained for Boy Scouts, new membership classifications soon were created—and others have been added periodically—to accommodate both older and younger lads: Sea Scouting, Explorer Scouting, Rovering, and now Air Scouting for youths of more advanced age; Cubbing, similar to the British Wolf Cubs, for youngsters of nine, ten, and eleven. Lone Scouting, which began as a separate movement, was taken over and developed for boys in sparsely settled areas.

The drawing power of the prominent men who composed its leadership was demonstrated very early in ways that brought immeasurable prestige to the Boy Scouts of America.[1] Thus, on a well-timed visit to the United States in 1910, Baden-Powell, the recognized "father of scouting," singled it out of the several scouting groups in this country as *the* Boy Scout movement. His public bestowal of that recognition at a dinner presented by the organization won wide publicity. Similarly, within the first year President Taft accepted the honorary presidency of the Boy Scouts and established a precedent that has continued with every succeeding President of the United States. He went further and invited the leaders of the

[1] Of its 26 officers and board members in 1920, one was the President and one a former president of the United States, six were bankers, four financiers, two merchants, two political economists, and one each a jurist, chain newspaper publisher, author-publisher, an ex-governor of a state, a member of the Assembly of another state, manufacturer, insurance man, and public service representative, in addition to two employed members of the staff. See Tenth Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1920.

movement to the White House for their first annual meeting. By 1916, also, the Boy Scouts of America was able to achieve a distinction accorded to very few private organizations—a charter from Congress protecting its name, insignia, and identity.

From other directions, the movement began to receive recognition as an educational force. One spokesman of note, Dean James E. Russell of Teachers College, Columbia University, said in 1917:

> . . . I declare the Boy Scout movement to be the most significant educational contribution of our time. The naturalist may praise it for its success in putting the boy close to nature's heart; the moralist, for its splendid code of ethics; the hygienist, for its methods of physical training; the parent, for its ability to keep his boy out of mischief; but from the standpoint of the educator, it has marvelous potency for converting the restless, irresponsible, self-centered boy into the straightforward, dependable, helpful young citizen. . . . Scoutcraft is not intended to be a substitute for schooling. It is a device for supplementing the formal instruction of the schools, by leading the boy into new fields and giving him a chance to make practical use of all his powers, intellectual, moral and physical. . . .[1]

The Boy Scouts of America was only four years old when the writer of a book on training and recreation for youth proposed that its program be incorporated into the nation's public school curriculum and be "required of all boys."[2]

Meanwhile, in 1914 Teachers College of Columbia

[1] "Scouting Education," in Educational Review, June, 1917, pp. 7–8. (Published as a pamphlet by the Boy Scouts of America, New York, December, 1930.)

[2] Curtis, Henry S., Play and Recreation for the Open Country. Ginn and Company, Boston, 1914, p. 150.

University offered its students two separate courses in scouting with credit. Other schools and colleges, including the Universities of Wisconsin and California, followed with similar courses.

Still another mark of public interest and enthusiasm came from judges of juvenile courts. In an article reporting the views of several men in that field, The New York Times quoted Judge Benjamin B. Lindsey, who early allied himself with scouting, as acclaiming the Boy Scout movement "our greatest hope, the greatest single activity in this country promising a solution, not only of the boy problem, but the girl problem, for the best protector of girls is the youth who lives up to the laws and ideals of the Boy Scouts." Then the significant, if sweeping, comment: "After 15 years of juvenile work I say without question that if you will give the Boy Scout movement the moral and financial support it rightfully demands, the Juvenile Court will soon no longer be needed."[1] In later years Judge Lindsey was to make a more qualified appraisal of scouting.[2]

Reservations Toward the New Movement

While the Boy Scouts obviously made strides in achieving public favor, many persons who watched the movement with interest did so with a good measure of reserve. All of its growing support and prestige therefore proved a valuable cushion as the Boy Scouts of America encountered difficulties during the early years that rose in part from popular misconceptions about the organization, or from its acknowledged errors, or from other causes that brought embarrass-

[1] The New York Times, December 5, 1915.
[2] See p. 88.

ment in one form or another. It is necessary here only to indicate briefly the nature of such troubles, since criticisms of the movement are discussed at greater length in Chapter V, Dealing with Public Attitudes.

One of the first, and thereafter most persistent, charges aired publicly was that this constituted a military organization instilling thoughts of war in the minds of boys. That harmful accusation grew largely out of the failure, or inability, of large groups of the people to distinguish between the Boy Scouts of America and the competitive agency known as the American Boy Scouts which was avowedly military in purpose and permitted its youthful members to drill with rifles. It actually led the men in command to lean over backward in developing *peace-scouting*, but the muddle took years to clear, ultimately culminating in a lawsuit which, in effect, compelled the military group to disband.

Another source of serious difficulty was the early action of both organized labor and the Socialist Party in denouncing the movement. The cause here stemmed in the main from two parts of the Scout Law, as originally conceived, which exacted a promise from each boy member of unyielding loyalty "to the President, and to his officers, and to his parents, his country, and his employers" and unwavering obedience to his superiors.[1] The national officers of the Boy Scouts caused the objectionable passages to be recast, then spent serious effort to persuade the unions and the Socialists of the value of scouting and finally won the support of those groups.

[1] Seton, Ernest Thompson, A Handbook of Woodcraft, Scouting, and Life-Craft. Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1910.

Nor was the movement without internal disruptions. The public was permitted full awareness of a conflict between the chief scout executive and Ernest Thompson Seton which resulted in the resignation of the latter and was heightened by a strong exchange between them in the press.[1]

Building Goodwill

Overshadowing all difficulties, however, were the numerous "good turns" performed from the earliest days of scouting which succeeded in winning goodwill and establishing the movement in public favor. Prior even to the celebration of its tenth birthday the Boy Scouts of America recorded a long list of distinctive services to the nation.

These included its active co-operation with other agencies, begun in 1912, to promote a "safe and sane Fourth of July." They included also such accomplishments as that of a year later when, under the glare of national attention, Boy Scouts performed with credit in helping to control excited crowds and to avert panic during the woman suffrage parade in Washington, D.C., which coincided with the inauguration of President Wilson. They embraced services such as those provided by scouts at the time of the disastrous Ohio and Indiana floods of 1913 and in connection with World War I when Boy Scouts sold millions of dollars worth of Liberty Loan bonds, served as amateur timber cruisers to seek out stands of precious walnut used in gun-stocks, distributed war literature, and performed other necessary jobs.

[1] See The New York Times, December 6, 7, and 11, 1915.

CHAPTER II

SYMBOLS AND PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING

THE POWER to command attention and to exert influence is inherent in the symbol, and its application is age-old. Before men could claim a "public" more extensive than a handful of fellow-tribesmen, they were scratching out pictographs to express ideas. And the histories of nations are inextricably bound up with symbolic devices such as the immortal "Don't Tread on Me" of the Revolutionary War.

Of course, distinctive symbols have so multiplied in use that today they are made to serve in countless ways to create public understanding and instill confidence. To a considerable extent they even guide modern living. Thus, millions of men and women in this country respond with partisan fervor to the likeness of an elephant or a donkey. They rely upon a GE or a GM to indicate a certain quality in a product. They depend upon news in their daily papers because it carries the imprint AP or UP or another that is familiar. They are assured of value by a particular jeweler's hallmark.

The armed forces of the nation employ whole categories of symbols. The field of medicine uses special marks and signs that identify it to the people. So do other professions, crafts, and pursuits.

Social agencies for one reason or another, however, tend to use symbols only sparingly in their public relations, though there are a few conspicuous excep-

tions, including, among others, the Red Cross, the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A., and various community chests—but perhaps most notably, the Boy Scouts. The distinctive symbolism of scouting—its marks and badges, its uniform, its pictorial qualities, watchwords, slogans, and characteristic language—actually plays a vital part in making the movement known and popularly acceptable.

Planned Use of Symbols

It was with the avowed purpose of stimulating the interest of boys that the men behind the movement wove into the fabric of scouting those devices which make for graphic and emotional appeal. This was as true of its terminology as of its accoutrements.

Baden-Powell, the British general who formally initiated the movement, told how the choices were made, and how even the first problem—the selection of a name for his new program for boys—was met.

> What to call it? There's a lot in a name. Had we called it what it was, viz. a "Society for the Propagation of Moral Attributes," the boy would not exactly have rushed for it. But to call it SCOUTING and give him the chance of becoming an embryo SCOUT, was quite another pair of shoes. His inherent "gang" instinct would be met by making him a member of a "Troop" and a "Patrol." Give him a uniform to wear, with Badges to be worn on it for proficiency in Scouting—and you got him.
>
> Under the term "Scout" one could hold up for his hero worship such men as backwoodsmen, explorers, hunters, seamen, airmen, pioneers and frontiersmen. . . .[1]

[1] Baden-Powell of Gilwell, Lord, Lessons from the 'Varsity of Life. G. Arthur Pearson, Ltd., London, 1933, pp. 277–278.

Of the uniform, Baden-Powell said further: "For the boy a uniform is a big attraction, and when it is a dress such as backwoodsmen wear it takes him in imagination to be directly linked up with those frontiersmen who are heroes to him." Furthermore, he emphasized, it "makes for Brotherhood, since when universally adopted it covers up all differences of class and country."[1]

Indeed, every youngster who enrolls in the Boy Scouts of America is required to learn that the uniform *stands for something* and he must know what that is. His Handbook tells him that the uniform is, first, "a token that the Scout belongs"; second, that it "symbolizes the boy's obligation to measure up to a high standard of *character*," and, further, that it "stands for *service* . . . signifies *democracy* . . . stands for *outdoor life*." In the same way, the boy learns that the badges and insignia which he acquires "indicate the measure of service the Scout is prepared to render to others."[2]

Of course, it is not merely the scout, or the prospective scout, whose attention and interest are drawn to the symbols and symbolic language which form such a distinctive part of the movement. Broadly speaking, "everybody" knows that the lad in the khaki uniform is a Boy Scout and that the motto, "Be Prepared," is associated with scouting. The public in general may not be aware, as each scout is required to learn, that the fleur-de-lis on the badge stands for the North point on the navigator's compass

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 284–285.

[2] Handbook for Boys. First Edition, Thirty-Sixth Printing. Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1943, pp. 42–43, 46.

which aims, like scouting, in the *right direction*, but this symbol is widely associated with Boy Scouts. Similarly, the daily "good turn," the scout oath, or promise, and the scout law which characterizes the Boy Scout as being trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent—are commonly known to the people at large.

Public Relations Aspects

Marks and devices of such range would have comparatively little importance in creating cordiality and popular understanding, however, if they were not consistent with public tastes and heartily acceptable. Indeed, the intention governing the use of symbols is of as much consequence as the effective or ineffective manner in which they are employed. It is obvious, for instance, that while symbolism plays a big part in the rituals and procedures of lodges, fraternities, and societies of many types, the whole thing tends to remain a guarded secret of the membership without meaning for the outsider.

The issue is clear with the Boy Scouts. Not only do symbols fill an essential part of the incentive and ritual of membership; they serve an important function in maintaining good relations between the movement and the public—and intentionally so. Official statements describing that best known of all scouting devices, the uniform, emphasize the point in the following words: "The Scout Uniform is a part of the romance of Scouting. It is a symbol of the ideals and outdoor activities for which the Movement stands. . . . The Scout Uniform has earned the respect of the general

public. It is one of the significant and important features of the Boy Scout Movement. . . ." And again: "One of the ideas back of the wearing of the Scout Uniform was thus to advise the public that here was a young man ready to render many kinds of service."[1]

The Boy Scout in uniform actually exerts a strong influence upon public opinion of scouting. And in recognizing this, there is no necessity to consider either the criticisms that have been voiced of the uniforming of youngsters or the stanch support which has been given to the practice. It is enough to check upon common experience. For example, one sees the khaki-clad boy helping to guide traffic and instantly appreciates the propriety of the situation. This same youngster may assist a pedestrian across an intersection, and the reaction of the bystander is one of understanding approval of the "good turn"; *good turn* itself being a scouting term which the observer is quite likely to know. Let an emergency occur such as the disappearance of a child in the woods, and the picture of uniformed scouts engaged in the hunt lifts community morale. Popular approval is no less emphatic when these youngsters undertake salvage collections or other wartime services.

Naturally, the scout in uniform does not inevitably stir popular approval. Many a jest has been directed toward the over-zealous boy in scouting attire, and he is the subject of countless whimsical cartoons. His actions may indeed give rise to irritation. But instances of the sort demonstrate even further the opinion-making potentialities of this symbol.

[1] Murray, William D., The History of the Boy Scouts of America. Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1937, pp. 164, 210.

Like the uniform, badges are at once a big part of the scouting program and an important means by which public understanding is created. To the boy and to the general public alike—especially those segments comprising his parents and friends and the millions of men and boys who have actively engaged in scouting—they signify competence which the movement is able to develop in the participant and, in addition, suggest both the color and drama of the program.

The boy's scouting life becomes virtually a succession of symbolic badges. He starts with an emblem that indicates his admission as a *tenderfoot* and thereupon receives the right to adorn his uniform with various insignia indicating his particular *troop* and *local council* affiliation. As he advances to higher ranks, enrolls in special services, establishes records for attendance at troop meetings, or passes membership milestones he is privileged to add others. For learning a prescribed minimum about as many different crafts and sciences as he chooses or for accomplishing certain feats of skill he may acquire *merit badges* which total more than 100 in number. Meanwhile, his scoutmaster, the staff of his Boy Scout camp, the chaplain of his troop, and the many other adult officers and workers in scouting, both volunteer and professional, wear distinctive badges of one sort or another.

Moreover, the awarding of badges becomes an occasion for public ceremony. Scarcely any such event is considered too small to be treated as a matter of public interest. If the incident is obviously one of limited appeal, such as the so-called "tenderfoot

investiture ceremony," scout leaders strive only to assemble an audience composed of scout parents and officials, endeavoring perhaps to see that the affair is reported in local newspapers.[1] Depending, beyond that, upon the impressiveness of the event, it may become one of wide, or even extensive, public concern. Awards for lifesaving often are reported nationally by the press and other informational media. And with all the attention normally accorded his public actions, the President of the United States, as honorary president of the Boy Scouts of America, occasionally makes presentations in person. As local councils have their *courts of honor* composed of community leaders, so does the national scouting organization maintain a *national court of honor* to consider and pass formally upon cases of high merit and heroism on the part of Boy Scouts.

Watchwords and Slogans

The pictorial qualities with which scouting has surrounded itself are matched in both intent and effect by its peculiarly pat terms and language designed to appeal to the participant and the outsider alike.

While it is not unusual for a specialized activity or profession to develop its own idiom—and social work is no exception—the Boy Scout movement has built up a whole pattern of descriptive expressions to symbolize the romance of scouting. Starting with the motto, "Be Prepared," and the more obvious terms, such as *scouting* itself, which already have been mentioned, the activities of the movement, its methods,

[1] See Handbook for Scoutmasters: A Manual of Leadership. Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1932, pp. 45–49.

ritual, objectives, and interests all are encompassed in its language.

Any Boy Scout naturally could be expected to repeat the oath of membership in which he promises, among other things, to keep himself *physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.* But this statement of purpose, which has been repeated by youngsters since the movement began in this country in 1910, has become commonly known also to large segments of the public able to identify it with scouting; so much so that the President of the United States in a wartime message directed to the people at large, as well as to scouts, could use it without qualification, saying:

> We must remember that next to active military service itself, there is no higher opportunity for serving our country than helping youth to carry on in their efforts to make themselves physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight. . . .[1]

The word pilgrimage has its common dictionary meaning. But the Boy Scouts introduced the *patriotic pilgrimage* as a regular program activity in which uniformed youngsters make ceremonial visits to historic shrines and to the graves of notable citizens. Whereupon, the press annually reports, among other such events, the Boy Scout pilgrimage to the grave of Theodore Roosevelt. Similarly, a camping trip to extensive scout properties in the Rocky Mountains is known as a *high adventure pilgrimage.*

[1] Message from President Roosevelt, presented by Vice-President Wallace over the National Broadcasting Company, February 10, 1942. Published in full in the Thirty-Second Annual Report of the Boy Scouts of America, 1941; Government Printing Office, Washington, 1942, p. 73.

So, too, do the scouts stage *camporees*, which are competitive camping expeditions, *jamborees*, which are large encampments, and *circuses*, which are public exhibitions of scouting skills. Individual scouts perform daily *good turns* and scouts collectively, *national good turns*. A scout *learns by doing*. An adult participant is a *scouter* or, in the younger boy program, a *cubber* or—the only place in scouting which permits women as participants—a *den mother*. Such characteristic expressions of scouting are in wide circulation. They are used in the literature of the movement; more importantly, however, they are used by the spokesmen of and for the movement and by the channels of information which report upon it. As a means of adding color to scouting, the terms speak for themselves.

Fitting the Symbol to the Program

Since its virtue, as well as its function, rests in the capacity to express ideas, the symbol, when used, should be able to pass two tests. Does it convey what is intended? Does it, of itself, stimulate interest—can it catch on with the public? Unless appropriate to the idea, or ideas, behind it, the symbol has no greater worth in creating popular understanding than have inept newspaper stories or other improperly applied materials of public information. And unless powerful enough to attract attention, its meaning will be lost in obscurity.

On the whole, the symbolism of the Boy Scouts passes these tests by wide margins. It has worn well during more than three decades of scouting. Its public relations value is immense.

CHAPTER III

RELATIONS WITH THE CITIZEN

Symbolism, color, and dramatic activities all possess great attention values and can serve effectively in creating public understanding. But it should be remembered that these are simply *elements* in the public relations pattern, and even when woven into the fabric of a movement, as they have been in the Boy Scouts of America, they leave the citizenry detached and without personal concern. Something more must be supplied to effect the rounded relationship between the agency and its public, or publics, and participation is a good part of it.

Clearly, the citizen and the sponsoring agency profit together when the public is given a sense of personal identification with a cause. On the one hand, the individual who feels himself a part of a movement, who shares in its planning, accomplishments, and pleasures (no less than in its burdens and disappointments), enjoys the role of a partisan. At the same time, the organized movement gains precisely what it needs: public interest and support. For the cause in which the average citizen sees his own needs or interests expressed encounters little difficulty in gaining approval—be it a matter of funds for public education, contributions to a relief agency in times of war or disaster, air-warden service when the threat of bombings hangs over a nation at war, membership in a movement that pays out in personal satisfaction, or something else.

Yet, the whole thing usually must be planned consciously and carefully, because degree of support may depend not only upon the issue at stake but upon the efficacy with which its requirements are dramatized and personal response is cultivated. That becomes the responsibility of the sponsoring agency.

Although methods vary by which this sense of identification is effected, one which receives a good deal of attention in this chapter is the cultivation of the volunteer relationship. Scouting has acquired a huge public—or a network of publics—imbued with the feeling of belonging to, or having some part in, the movement; and the volunteer is the pivot upon which citizen participation turns.

The Scouting Publics

The Boy Scout movement began on a volunteer basis and has expanded in that respect ever since. As explained by James E. West, the first chief scout executive, whose leadership extended over thirty-two years: "The boy volunteers because he wants to be a Scout; the man volunteers because he wants to give service; the public volunteers to give support. The essence of the strength of Scouting is that volunteer participation by the boy, by the man, and by the public."[1] Consequently, when in 1942 the year's total enrollment of boys reached 1,205,119, there were 347,961 adult volunteer leaders, against a total of but 1,455 paid executives throughout the country.

What is implied in participation of such scope may be gauged by the fact that nearly 11,000,000 indi-

[1] Thirty-Second Annual Report of the Boy Scouts of America, 1941. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1942, p. 17.

viduals have held membership in the years between 1910 and 1944, and some 2,200,000 of them have been adult volunteers. Even allowing for reasonable flagging of interest and for disaffections among present and past participants, the Boy Scout movement today stands as something real and intimate to a public of tremendous proportions composed of such segments, or individual "publics," as scouts, former scouts, and prospective scouts, scout parents and friends, volunteer leaders, former scouters, and others. This is a public that takes into account virtually all economic, religious, and racial groups. It is made up of residents in both urban and rural communities throughout the country.

The Boy Public

At the head of the public-interest list, of course, stands the boy. Scouting belongs to *him:* to the active scout, to the youth who has passed through the ranks, and to the youngster who aspires to membership. If the boy had not taken to it—if his interest could not have been sustained generation after generation—the movement might long since have withered in some arid zone of obscurity instead of running up its impressive Boy Scout (and Cub) enrollment record which shows gains of from 55,000 in 1911 to 143,000 in 1915; 628,000 in 1930; 1,105,000 in 1940, and approximately one and a quarter million youngsters in 1943.

Under the pattern of the Boy Scouts of America every active scout is a *participating* member; he does not merely belong to an organization. And that is how

his personal relationship is nurtured. A lad may drop out of the movement at any time, but he cannot rise in the ranks, or even remain within them, unless engaged one way or another in the diversified program: attending troop meetings, joining in outdoor activities, acquiring handicraft skills, performing good turns, or enlisting in other scouting enterprises. His desire to be a scout, and always a better one, is whetted by the opportunity to wear the uniform, by the allure of numerous symbolic badges, by the patriotic services he is called upon to perform, by the romantic attractions always held out to him as a Boy Scout.

At the same time, no graduate of the ranks is considered by the scouting organization to have pulled away from the movement. Though he has outgrown the Boy Scout age group, the young man becomes a potential scoutmaster or a volunteer worker of another sort; or he may prove to be timber for the professional staff. In either case, he may expect solicitation urging him to join the corps of scouters. While the greater number of former scouts retain no active connection with the movement, their bond of interest is believed to be sustained. Certainly the Boy Scout organization goes a long way to preserve the relationship. During World War II, for example, considerable national publicity has been pegged on the fact that a number of war heroes once were scouts. Close touch also has been maintained with the hundreds of professional scouters serving in the armed forces in order to sustain their interest in scouting careers. Personal letters, scouting bulletins, and various publications

have gone to them regularly from national headquarters.

Standing at the other extreme of the boy public is the prospective scout, and the Boy Scouts of America has a disarmingly clear statistical picture of him before he ever is old enough to join the ranks. On the basis of what the scouting organization calls "boy fact surveys," which have been made in more than 2,000 instances with the co-operation of local schools, scout leaders know how many boys in a given area have expressed a desire to be scouts—and also the names of men whom the youngsters consider "outstanding" and therefore approachable as leadership material. An abundance of information gathered nationally by its research department indicates not only the number of youngsters within scouting age groups who wish to join the Boy Scouts of America, but also the extent to which new troops must be created to accommodate them, and the number of volunteer (and professional) scouters necessary to support those troops in addition to membership units already existing.

Citing its studies, the movement contends that three out of every four boys in the nation wish to become scouts and holds that more than half of them are denied the privilege only because insufficient troops have been established and too few adults have been secured to accomplish that end. It seeks to give those boys the opportunity to belong. Thus, in 1941 the National Council declared it would have to increase its scout troops by more than 22,000 to a total of 65,000 in order to meet expressed demands of the time. That the achievement of this aim stands well in the future, however, was indicated at the close

of 1942 when a net gain of but 170 troops, or four-tenths of one per cent, was recorded.[1]

Nevertheless, the Boy Scouts of America has held for a number of years to what is called its "national scouting objective," which seeks to make one out of every four new male citizens a four-year scout-trained man. In view of the shorter tenure of numerous youngsters who continuously drop out of scouting, it is necessary, according to statistical findings, to recruit half the eligible boys in the country: a process again that depends overwhelmingly upon adult participation.

The Pattern for Volunteer Leadership

With an army of volunteer leaders which outnumbers its professional staff by 230 to one, the Boy Scouts of America can trace such extensive citizen participation to a pattern developed in the period of 1910 and 1911 when the movement determined that its growth and success would depend upon volunteer service, then proceeded by means of persuasion to enlist it.

Murray, in his official history of scouting, says that despite freely voiced predictions from many quarters that "it would be impossible to get men to give continuous and sustained leadership, unless they were

[1] See Thirty-Second Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1941, p. 234.

The Boy Scouts of America has expressed concern over an increasingly high mortality among established troops during recent years. The Thirty-Third Annual Report notes that: "The number of net dropped troops over the past few years is rapidly approaching the number of new troops. . . . A plateau seems to have been reached in the number of new troops. . . . The causal factors that have been responsible for this situation can be ascertained only by intensive field study." (Thirty-Third Annual Report, 1942, p. 239.)

paid for it," the Boy Scouts of America found from the outset that it could obtain adult leaders in all parts of the country to do the job. And once a basic volunteer structure was created, "local committees and local councils were instituted to serve and unify their existing Troops, as well as aid in the proper development of new ones."[1] As the pattern has gradually been revised and enlarged, it accounts today not only for a volunteer corps of approximately 100,000 scoutmasters and assistant scoutmasters—the men who carry on the scouting program directly with the boys—but more than twice that number of committeemen, officers, and counselors serving locally, regionally, and nationally.

Nor has the Boy Scouts of America ever permitted itself a let-up in the job of volunteer recruitment, or of establishing a sense of identification between the adult leader and the movement.

One large city where scouting has for years enjoyed a high measure of public esteem offers a well-defined example of the process. There the Boy Scout executive credited the favorable position of scouting, at least in part, to the conscious cultivation of the goodwill of civic and business leaders who are singled out and appointed to ranking places in the scout organization. Thus, the managing editors of all the daily newspapers serve as members of the board of directors of the local council. The scout executive calls each by his first name, and he commented, "they are just as close to the Boy Scouts as my telephone is to my hand." Similarly, a representative of each radio

[1] Murray, William D., The History of the Boy Scouts of America. Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1937, pp. 247–248.

station is a member of the council's public relations committee. The list includes many other men prominently identified with both private and public affairs. Nor are other men in key positions overlooked. For example, the staff of every one of the metropolitan newspapers includes editors and reporters who maintain a personal interest in scouting as former scouts, as volunteer scouters, or as fathers of Boy Scouts or Cubs, and the executive is able to, and does, check with them by telephone at intervals; a great help in strengthening the bond of cordiality and getting Boy Scout news into the press.[1]

Securing the Manpower

If the number of persons identified with the Boy Scout movement is large, the degree of identification also is notable as a result of the intensity of recruitment efforts and the policy of indoctrination and training.

Perhaps the foundation of the volunteer recruitment effort rests, first, in the unyielding faith held by the men of the movement in their "product"—scouting—and, second, in their accurately gauged confidence that when urgently and tellingly prevailed upon, other men will be induced to share time and effort for the cause. Consequently, those who do the recruiting—and they number many times more volunteer than professional workers—spare little reasonable effort in the process.

The responsibility extends throughout the entire organization of scouting—nationally, regionally, and

[1] Personal interview, 1941.

locally. Each level of operation carries on its share of the recruitment program, which is carefully integrated with the others, while direction, leadership, and inspiration stem from national headquarters. It is difficult to read an annual report of the Boy Scouts of America without likening sections pertaining to leadership expansion to a sort of "pep talk" designed to stimulate team members into action. Thus, a graphic illustration depicting the more than 750,000 "unreached boys" of twelve years old in this country shows, according to the chief scout executive's explanation, "how many boys . . . fail to have the benefits of Scouting because of lack of leadership, sponsoring institutions, and adequate financial resources." Or again, in citing the hearty approval given by the President of the United States to scout work as volunteer wartime service: "What a tribute this is to those who are holding the job of Scoutmaster or Cubmaster of a group of boys! Those who hold these commissions should stand high among their friends and in the community. They should be proud of their relationship. . . ."[1]

The recruiting job branches out in many directions. Literature directed to the volunteer and to the prospective volunteer leader is turned out continuously by the national office for local use. Regional committees, troop committees, and scout commissioners—laymen all—serve in every section of the country and accept, among other duties, the responsibility for fostering leadership participation. This obligation usually entails some form of direct, personal

[1] Thirty-Second Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1941, pp. 19, 11.

relationship with many men in their communities; indeed, published instructions on "How to Recruit a Scoutmaster" urge troop committeemen to "combine the skill of the insurance agent and the car salesman" in approaching each prospective scouter with an individual "sales campaign."[1] As mentioned earlier, young men graduated from the ranks of senior scouts are enlisted by elder scouters for volunteer service. Field staffs operating from national headquarters line up scout-trained college men either as volunteer or professional prospects, though this source of career scouters ran out in the war years of the 1940's and, as an alternative, efforts were directed toward recruiting from the fields of education, business, and social work. Careful study is given to cases where individual troops lapse into inactivity and adult leadership slips away, and national staff men, supported by the local councils, undertake extensive correspondence designed to bring the workers back to the fold. The national office credited this mail follow-up with returning "thousands of men" to scouting in 1941 alone. One new plan to improve both the recruiting and training of lay participants was carried through recently when the National Council and 20 local councils specially designated as "demonstration areas" tried out various newly developed membership techniques adapted to the particular requirements of scouting. Recruiting measures which passed the test were made available to all other councils.

[1] Local Council Manual on Organization and Extension. Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1940, pp. 61, 64. See also pp. 84–86.

Training the Citizen Participant

The vigorous recruitment of volunteer leadership is matched by a correspondingly complete program of training which in recent years has been extended to include not only scouters (and cubbers) but also scout parents and other friends of the movement. To be sure, the effort involving parents and friends outside the realm of scouting is far more limited than the process of indoctrination developed for active participants. That it is made at all indicates the value placed upon the widest possible cultivation of interest and support.

Years ago the chief scout executive advanced as the "three greatest needs" of the movement: "training, more training, yet more training,"[1] and that idea has been emphasized and re-emphasized by the Boy Scouts of America. A modest start toward a national educational program for scout leaders was made very early in its history when a training "school" was held for two weeks in 1910 in connection with the Y.M.C.A. Boys Work Institute. Forty men attended. Out of this beginning has grown the present pattern, which is designed to imbue every adult participant, volunteer and professional alike, with an understanding of the ideals, aspirations, and methods of the movement.

The national organization makes no pretense that all, or even half, the volunteer leaders have actually taken the full training schedule laid out for them. But pressure is constantly applied upon them to do so. Moreover, opportunities for training in funda-

[1] Murray, William D., The History of the Boy Scouts of America, p. 348.

mentals of the movement are continually being simplified, made more attractive, and extended, nationally, regionally, and locally, with the result that the National Council reports progressive improvement in the record. It was announced, for example, that during 1942 an introductory training course in the fundamentals of the Boy Scout movement was offered 3,744 times and 34,500 leaders working directly with boys were reported to have taken it or similar instruction given previously.

Co-ordinated, directed, and promoted by a special national staff unit, the Educational Service, this program blankets the field of scouting with training conferences, institutes, meetings, round tables, discussion sessions, field service, correspondence, and an abundant supply of handbooks, periodicals, and other literature keyed to particular needs.

Nationally, the most notable feature is a year-round series of courses presented both for professional and for volunteer scouters on a scout-owned estate and training center in the hills near Mendham, New Jersey. In 1942 nine such "schools" extending over a total of 270 days were conducted for men engaged, or aspiring to careers, in scouting, while 26 shorter sessions were held for volunteer leaders; 621 of the latter attending. Subjects range from camping, craft methods, emergency service, and administration to the public relations of the movement.

Another type of training is made available in a plan known as the "Executive's Growth Program," directed to professional workers. A voluntary post-graduate course which follows national training school instruction, this consists of home study of

scouting techniques, with guidance given by correspondence. Regional activity includes year-round seminars for professional staff men and institutes for both volunteers and professionals, all presented under the direction of national field workers.

At these two stages—national and regional—the emphasis is placed mainly upon "training the trainers"—men who pass along the fruits of their instruction to other participants in their own communities. The effort locally, however, centers upon the man—and in the cubbing program the "den mother" as well—who deals directly with the boy. As mentioned above, the mothers, fathers, and friends of scouts also are being brought increasingly into the sphere of the program at this point. Recently the National Council has striven to make local training more attractive by improving the quality of instruction, by using such means as small and informal discussion groups, and even by offering personal coaching. Out of experience gained in the "demonstration councils" to which reference already has been made,[1] a one-session introductory course was devised for scout leaders, parents, and other interested citizens which included the showing of scout-made motion pictures.

A relatively new adjunct to the training program, motion pictures have received increasing attention. A number of 16 mm. films have been produced for rental or sale to local councils on such subjects as cubbing, camping, and the long-span program of boy scouting which now embraces all age groups from nine to twenty-one.

[1] See p. 45.

Nor does the planned educational program end with citizen groups that are "in," or closely related to, scouting. Many colleges, universities, and theological seminaries throughout the country offer courses based upon methods and procedures of scouting, generally as the subject relates to community organization rather than with the intended purpose of developing scout leaders. During 1939, according to tabulations by the Boy Scouts of America, 103 such accredited courses were presented. For the national office, this entails many conferences and much correspondence with the schools, plus the preparation of special subject materials, since it is the purpose of the Boy Scouts of America to promote ever wider interest in this educational process.

Telling the Story Through the Participant

As brought out in this discussion, the Boy Scout movement starts its program of interpretation with its own participants who comprise an extensive public interest group well disposed in favor of scouting. By means of a carefully devised process of training, intended not only to inculcate the ideals of the movement but to instruct the participants in their specific roles, the Boy Scouts of America makes all reasonable effort to build upon their interest and enthusiasms. Thus, the boy member, who receives progressive indoctrination in scouting at each stage of advancement in the ranks, is joined as a disciplined participant and an understanding spokesman by his adult leader and, to a greater or lesser extent, by the numerous other persons who compose the participating ranks of the movement.

The bridge between this citizen group and the general public—or, more properly, *publics*—is perhaps fairly obvious. The enthusiastic Boy Scout equipped to discuss the subject is an ambulatory interpreter of scouting; and actually, each advanced scout is urged as a way of performing a "good turn" to practice his training by recruiting and instructing at least one other boy. So, too, is the interested adult a transmitter of the message of scouting. The volunteer troop committeeman who sets forth to recruit another worker promotes the movement in the process. The parent who is able to tell another parent something about scouting is performing similar service. The man or the woman who is willing and able to speak up for the movement among friends and neighbors is a particularly valuable asset. Indeed, all of them—personally identified in one way or another with scouting—help to cultivate the popular acceptance and to create the understanding which are so essential to a movement of this nature.

CHAPTER IV

RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY

THE CITIZEN we have been considering works, plays, and lives as a member of various groups. His particular persuasions link him to others of like views. His companionship is found in clubs, churches, and societies of many sorts. He "belongs" to a definite neighborhood or town or region. In short, his interests are keyed to those of his *community*.

While it is the individual who provides the manpower and leadership, a movement such as scouting depends no less upon an organized citizenry for interest and support. And it follows that a sense of identification must also be effected between the movement and the community.

In this connection, the scouting method of organization is worthy of study because the Boy Scouts of America has traditionally recognized a need to relate itself to community interests and has developed special techniques of its own for doing so.

It is familiar practice for an agency to present its case to lodges, civic groups, and many other organized societies for the purpose of cultivating understanding and enlisting support. The Boy Scouts of America, however, goes far beyond such an approach to actually integrate itself with the established institutions in the local community. Out of the process emerge practical values from the point of view of administration and public relations alike.

Planting the Movement in the Home Community

Boy Scout troops are not merely creations of the scouting organization. They exist because "outsiders" sponsor them. In thousands of American localities and neighborhoods, agencies and institutions of one sort or another provide the opportunity which enables groups of youngsters to band together as regularly enrolled scouts. Occasionally, too, groups of citizens otherwise unaffiliated join together as the sponsoring body behind a troop. Always, however, there must be an agency, an institution, or a group to underwrite the scouting unit in which the boy enrolls, for the boy does not simply join the movement; he enters the ranks as a member of an established troop which, in turn, functions under the jurisdiction of a local council and maintains its scouting affiliation only as long as it complies with regulations prescribed by the national organization.[1] That has been the method of scouting since its early days.

While other youth-serving agencies such as Y.M.C.A.'s, boys' clubs, and settlements furnish their members with places of assembly and, usually, employed supervision as well, the Boy Scout movement takes a different position and offers these very organizations, among others in the community, the opportunity to incorporate scouting into their own activities. Indeed, the Boy Scouts of America empha-

[1] In the branch of scouting developed for youngsters in remote rural areas, a Lone Scout is a boy who follows the scout program as an individual, under the leadership of a Lone Scout friend and counselor, or as a member of a Lone Scout tribe. In various other scouting classifications, the membership unit also bears its own distinctive designation, as *cub pack* for cubbing, *rover crews* for rovering, and *ships* for sea scouting, though the term *troop* is used generically for all of them.

sizes in its fundamental literature that "Scouting is organized in existing institutions, using their facilities and leadership, and with their full acceptance of certain responsibilities."[1] It is obvious that the Scout plan is possible only because other agencies have meeting facilities and manpower and are in a position to make them available.

A pamphlet directed to volunteer leaders and scout parents plays up relation of the movement to the community in these words:

> Scouting is not something by and for itself. It is a definite part of the life of the community. By playing its part and training boys to play theirs, it contributes to our national welfare. . . .
>
> Scouting is a program which institutions use in their work with boys. When an institution undertakes to sponsor a Scout Troop, a Cub Pack, or a Sea Scout Ship, it says in effect, "We are interested in the boys in our neighborhood. We want them to grow into the right kind of men; in other words, men of character trained for citizenship. For this purpose we will use the program of the Boy Scouts of America and will assume definite obligation to provide: 1, Adequate facilities, such as a meeting place and equipment; 2, Supervision and leadership for at least one year; and 3, in sponsoring a Troop, an opportunity for each Scout to spend a week or more in a summer camp conducted according to prescribed standards."[2]

And again, as expressed by a prominent clergyman-scouter, writing in a handbook on scouting for men and women of the Catholic faith:

[1] See Local Council Manual on Organization and Extension. Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1940, p. 69.

[2] Fundamentals of the Boy Scout Movement. Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1941, pp. 33–34.

It is of the genius of the Boy Scout Movement, that, in order to save its life it must lose it; that is, in order to accomplish its purpose in service to boys, it must submerge itself in the parent institutions which administer its program with boy groups. It is only on this basis that Scouting has been useful to the Church in its work with boys. . . .[1]

Of course, the troop is considered to belong to the sponsoring group.

Who, then, are the underwriters of scouting in the home community? In an analysis of the 51,347 Boy Scout troops and Cub packs in operation at the close of 1942, the national organization revealed that in the main it is such firmly rooted institutions as churches, schools, and civic and fraternal organizations.[2] The churches and synagogues of more than 35 different religious sects accounted for 22,910, or some 44 per cent, of the total. Clubs and fraternal organizations sponsored 10,669, or nearly 21 per cent, and they included such variety as business and professional associations, exemplified by Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions clubs; veterans' groups, of which the American Legion was outstanding; fraternals, numbering among others Elks, Masons, and Eagles; orders with religious affiliation, such as B'nai B'rith and Knights of Columbus; Y.M.C.A.'s, Y.M.H.A.'s, labor councils, and others. Such community and civic groups as settlements, community centers, libraries, local improvement organizations, housing projects, and scout-

[1] Moore, the Very Rev. Msgr. Edward Roberts, National Director, Catholic Committee on Scouting, Introduction, Scouting for Catholics. Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1942, pp. ix–x.

[2] This total includes 8,552 units of the pre-Boy Scout age cubbing program. See Thirty-Third Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1942, pp. 138–141.

minded citizens backed 8,142, or almost 16 per cent, while parent-teacher associations, public, private, and parochial schools, colleges and universities, and miscellaneous sponsors supported the remainder of 9,626, or 18 per cent.

Many such groups are self-motivated. However, large numbers of them sponsor troops because they are encouraged or spurred in one way or another under a promotional program carried out by the Boy Scouts of America with much the same perseverance that marks its recruitment of volunteer leaders. The movement never yields from its conviction that more boys want to be scouts than ever have had the opportunity to do so; that scouting offers the kind of citizenship training to which every youngster is entitled, and that the only way to accomplish the resultant objectives is by obtaining an ever-increasing pool of citizen leadership and an ever-greater number of troop sponsors.

The result is an integrated effort of continuing duration which reaches from the National Council to the lay Committee on Organization and Extension in each local council, the committee that promotes the sponsorship of troops and supervises all attendant details.

Working from the Top

In reality, the process of integration begins at the national level. Since a large proportion of local institutions such as churches, clubs, fraternal groups, and others, stem from, or bear direct relationship to, national organizations, that starting point is considered most fruitful. A promotional liaison unit

known as the Relationships Service operates in the headquarters office of the Boy Scouts of America for the express purpose of fostering scouting through other organizations. Its methods involve close personal relationship with those groups and the production of an abundance of literature and promotional materials, all supplemented by liberal field service.

It is to be noted also that the stress placed by the movement upon volunteer leadership is as pronounced at this point as it is locally. True to the method followed throughout its range of operations, the Boy Scouts of America backs up every major undertaking in its so-called "institutional relations" program with a selected committee of lay scouters who not only lend the prestige of their names but serve as consultants and as working aides. Thus, in this instance, the over-all Committee on Relationships is supported by a Catholic Committee on Scouting, a Protestant Committee on Scouting, a Jewish Committee on Scouting, a Committee on Scouting in the Schools, and others.

Relations in the religious field, which typify this program, may be illustrated by the co-operation built up between the Boy Scouts of America and the Catholic Church. The Boy Scout movement has received not only the approval of the Catholic hierarchy of the United States but papal blessing as well—for reasons which apply pretty definitely to other religious groups, too: because it provides an opportunity for spiritual training as a part of the Boy Scout character-building process, because it presents a means of keeping the boy close to the church or to its affiliated groups, and because it offers a church-

sponsored activity leveled to the interest of the youngster. Ever since the Catholic Committee on Scouting was organized in 1928 an increasing amount of publicity and persuasion has been directed locally to churches and groups of that faith in an effort to increase the number of troops and to improve the quality of those in existence.[1]

A number of pamphlets and handbooks have been produced co-operatively by the national scouting office and this advisory committee of scouters to urge the extension of scout troops in churches, clubs, and church-connected agencies and tell how to do it. Keyed to the particular needs and interests of clergymen, club leaders, parents, and others of the faith, the tenor of these publications is indicated by the following excerpts from one of the most persuasive and useful of them all, Scouting for Catholics, a 138-page handbook (mentioned earlier), which by 1942 had run through two English-language editions, plus a Spanish edition of 5,000 copies. Describing the need for such a character-building program under church patronage, the text explains:

> The Boy Scouts of America offers an excellent leisure-time program which will develop character and citizenship and, under Catholic auspices, will do this according to Catholic standards. It gives us the program; we supernaturalize it. The Church, wise with the wisdom of the ages, is slow to approve any new movement; and that is the reason she has given definite approval to this movement only in comparatively recent years. But a program which has merited the approbation of the Church, has, in attaining that approbation, proven itself. . . .

[1] The Protestant Committee on Scouting was organized in 1923; the Jewish Committee, in 1926.

Again, after describing the essence of the Boy Scout movement, its tie-up with the church, and the ways in which troops are organized, the book stresses the need for scoutmasters—men who must volunteer their services if boys are to enjoy the fruits of church-sponsored scouting.

> Dare we say that there are not Catholic men capable and willing to undertake this important work? When have our Catholic men failed us? Let them know of this important work to be done, that the Pastor and Parish are behind them, that they will have the co-operation of a Troop Committee, that they will receive the assistance of the Scout Organization and its Commissioners, that the boys need them —and they will respond! They will do a creditable job— and what is more, they will enjoy it![1]

In addition to the special literature, a Boy Scout badge adapted to the Catholic program has been developed for proficiency not only in scouting but in service to the church.[2] Lectures on scouting are presented by professional scouters and lay members of the committee at theological seminaries. Field workers from the national staff assist local groups with their problems. And many related services are provided. As a result, well over 4,000 of the 22,910 Boy Scout troops and Cub packs sponsored by religious groups in 1942 were in operation under Catholic leadership, compared to fewer than 1,000 in 1930.

It is not only among religious groups that such a high degree of co-operation has been worked out.

[1] Scouting for Catholics, pp. 2, 33.

[2] Similar to the Ad Altare Dei award for Catholic scouts are the Pro Deo et Patria award for Lutheran scouts and the Ner Tamid award for Jewish scouts.

Similarly, the Committee on Scouting in the Schools has led the way in a nationwide program of promotion through school journals, educational conventions, and personal relations with school administrators. A special manual on Scouting in the Schools has been issued. Articles are released to parent-teacher publications and others in the educational field. And various methods are followed much like those mentioned above.

Special promotional efforts of the same type also are directed from the national scouting office to organizations such as the American Legion, whose local affiliates alone sponsor more than 2,500 troops, the United States Junior Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions, and business, professional, fraternal, social, and educational groups of many kinds.

Doing the Job Locally

Underpinning the nationally guided effort to increase support from other agencies is the work which goes on simultaneously and continually among the 550-odd local councils.

Aided by research and statistical guidance as well as special literature and field assistance from the national office, scout leaders in the home community tackle their job at the source. If a particular church is deemed a logical sponsor of a troop, they approach its pastor, its vestrymen, representatives of its men's club, or possibly all of them. If a school is considered for the purpose, they see its superintendent or the officers of its parent-teacher association. If it is a business group, a settlement, a veterans' post, a

fraternal order, or some other selected institution, they go directly to its leadership with facts, figures, and arguments. Sometimes the effort fails, possibly foundering on the objection of a pastor to scouting's approval of Sunday hikes or the complaint of a parent group that monthly dues and the cost of personal equipment makes participation too expensive for many youngsters. Sometimes the effort succeeds, and a new Boy Scout troop comes into being; always with adult supervision and meeting facilities supplied by the sponsoring agency.

In any case, local recruiters go to their task armed both with arguments and formulas provided by the national scouting office. How to Organize a Troop of Boy Scouts; Ten Steps—How to Organize a Cub Pack; The American Legion and the Boy Scouts of America; The Elks and the Boy Scouts, are just a few of the many manuals and pamphlets turned out for that purpose.

As already suggested, however, every troop is not the product of promotion by the Boy Scouts of America, either nationally or locally. Many an organization and group chooses entirely upon its own initiative to become a sponsor—and individuals such as juvenile court judges, police officers, and representatives of social agencies frequently recommend scout troops as a palliative to delinquency problems. All of which may in itself be a measure of successful community relationships.

In one large city, for example, the police department called upon the local council to help establish troops in an area with a high delinquency rate. Several local organizations and agencies volunteered

funds, and the project, begun in the middle 1930's, continued for several years. The police department itself gave much favorable publicity to what it considered the excellent results of the experiment.

While the inspiration and initiative in this case came from sources outside the movement, the job of effecting workable relationships naturally fell to the scouting organization. Hence, the establishment of troops entailed three typical steps: first, the enrollment of sponsoring agencies, such as churches, within the experimental area; second, the securing of scoutmasters (drawn entirely from police ranks—though in similar instances elsewhere leadership usually comes from the area itself), and, third, "boy fact surveys" to turn up the names of prospective scouts and their parents: the adults in order that their support could be enlisted in recruiting the youngsters.

Troop recruitment efforts of the Boy Scouts of America are decided on the basis of boyhood resource studies, both national and local. Not only is the boy population of a community known; the number of troops needed to meet the movement's membership objectives in each locality also is carefully determined. Goals are set by local councils and reviewed in regional offices of the Boy Scouts of America, with the record of each council reported regularly to the field as a means of spurring individual performance.

This pressure to promote new troops and meet scheduled membership quotas has sometimes led to a conflict in point of view between the national office and the local council. Varying degrees of resentment have been discovered from time to time. It must be recognized, therefore, that the effects here are not

all on the credit side of the ledger. The Boy Scout executive in one city frankly stated that, contrary to headquarters policy, both he and the lay scouters associated with him considered the question of numbers as one to be determined locally without intervention.[1] Any such points of friction, though, usually remain within the scouting organization.

Community Service

Association with other groups is only one of the two main methods by which the Boy Scout movement relates itself to the community. Public service is the other: service bestowed in the form of "good turns" of almost endless variety and scope. Being a form of relationship which is easily dramatized and publicized, this aspect of the Boy Scout program is probably a good deal better known than the first and has come to be accepted generally as the way in which the scout is integrated with his community.

If one goes back to the early days of the Boy Scouts of America and traces its record through the period of World War II, innumerable deeds in the public interest are revealed. They range from services performed spectacularly on the national scene to others carried out quietly in the local neighborhood. Indeed, more than three decades of scouting have shown how adaptable this part of its program is to changing conditions—and how well established is the idea that the scout troop is a ready source of help in time of need.

National good turns are illustrated by the following instances. There were, first, "clean-up campaigns"

[1] Personal interview, 1941.

and scouting's early participation in the "safe and sane Fourth of July." In 1913 scouts served as guides, messengers, and first aid workers when Confederate and G.A.R. veterans of the Civil War gathered to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg. During the influenza epidemic of 1918 Boy Scouts distributed thousands of pieces of literature containing information helpful in combating the disease, set up tents as temporary hospitals, and acted as orderlies and aides. Uniformed youngsters served similarly in connection with 1913 floods in Ohio and Indiana, 1921 floods in Colorado and Texas, the Florida hurricane of 1926, the St. Louis tornado of 1927, and other emergencies. During the depression of the 1930's they acted at the request of the President of the United States and honorary president of the Boy Scouts of America to gather clothing, household furnishings, and other necessities for hard-hit families.[1]

The war years of the 1940's brought out services equally varied and intensive. Upon the entry of the United States in the war in 1941, the Boy Scouts of America immediately communicated to the President a promise of "full and wholehearted co-operation of the entire active membership of our organization numbering 1,500,000 boys and men."[2] And the offer was accepted time after time by the chief executive and various war agencies. Boy Scouts already had performed numerous services during the state of national emergency preceding Pearl Harbor, but they

[1] See Murray, William D., The History of the Boy Scouts of America. Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1937, pp. 483–498.

[2] Thirty-Second Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1941, p. 33.

subsequently figured in scores of essential war projects—just as they had during World War I. In salvage drives they collected 10,500,000 of the 12,000,000 pounds of aluminum turned in throughout the country during 1941; they gathered 30,000,000 pounds of scrap rubber in four weeks of 1942, and scored a monthly average of 50,000,000 pounds of waste paper over a period of a year or more. They helped to promote and sell war bonds and stamps. They planted victory gardens and, when farm manpower became desperately short, joined other patriotic citizens in harvesting crops. The President of the United States in 1943 appointed scouts throughout the nation to serve as "dispatch bearers" to distribute wartime information published by the government for the people and in doing so, sent the following laudatory message to the national scouting organization:

> The fine work the Boy Scouts of America did in helping to win the last war leads me to ask Scouts and Scouters to take on an important commission as Government Dispatch Bearers for the Office of War Information.
>
> As a Dispatch Bearer your tasks will be to carry to the people of your community vital information prepared by your Government. It is information which our civilians must have as we fight on to final victory.
>
> I know that the Nation can count on you to perform this service willingly and faithfully.
>
> FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

Within the local community scouting service is continuous—if often less glamorous than instances already mentioned. In carrying out its regular pro-

gram, virtually any Boy Scout troop compiles a year-round record of good turns that may include such items as the distribution of community fund posters, cleaning the basement of a local church, ushering at a civic gathering or a school play, distributing toys at Christmas time, fighting grass fires and forest fires, providing color guards for local ceremonies, directing traffic in emergencies, and countless others. Each annual report of the Boy Scouts of America lists hundreds of typical good turns performed by troops as units.

Returns in Public Relations

There is little doubt that this twofold appeal of the Boy Scouts of America has proved a forceful builder of good public relations. Or that rewards have been reciprocal: to scouting and to the community alike.

On one hand the process of integration with other institutions has served not only to establish the Boy Scout movement in the local community with a minimum of administrative problems. The sponsoring group derives rich profit, too, as Murray observes, in "a program of youth-centered character and citizenship activities, under the general auspices and atmosphere of the institution."

On the other hand, scouting's plan of public service is to be measured not only in terms of a character-building device designed for youthful members—or even according to the value of multiple good turns. Equally important is the attitude of a community toward a movement that has demonstrated reliability in case of need. Again, as Murray sums it up: "The way in which boys who have had Scout experience

have conducted themselves in times of emergency, has produced wide public confidence in the Scout Program."[1]

Of course, this pattern is far from universally adaptable. At every turn it reflects the distinctive nature of scouting, and few movements could—or probably even should—belong to the whole community in the same sense. Suggested here, however, is the material advantage in public relations that arises when an agency maintains its identity and its own character while relating itself closely to community interests.

[1] The History of the Boy Scouts of America, pp. 211, 483.

CHAPTER V

DEALING WITH PUBLIC ATTITUDES

Any social movement that deals with many and varied elements of the public is exposed to a wide range of popular opinion which, under the best of circumstances, is not all favorable. This implies a need for continuous effort to smooth out areas of friction.

Equally challenging to good public relations planning is the fact that the very ingredients which make for approval and goodwill often contain germs of misunderstanding and distrust—and this seeming anomaly cannot be shrugged off.

Applied to the Boy Scouts of America, it shapes up this way. The movement is richly endowed with resources for the building of popularity; our story so far has largely been built out of them. Yet, each asset usually involves problems of its own. Consider, for example, scouting's colorful association with camping, trail-making, fire-building, and kindred lures of woods and fields. Not only did this romantic attraction account for much of the initial appeal of the Boy Scout movement; the feature has ever since excited the imagination of countless boys and adults. But seeds of dissatisfaction lie here, too. Over a period of years the scouting organization gradually tempered its out-of-door activities with the result that Boy Scouts now go to established camps, commonly riding to their destinations instead of hiking; they spend less time on the trail and more in the shelter of their troop

meeting rooms; their leaders usually are businessmen, clubmen, townsmen, rather than outdoorsmen—and many boys and men do not like the change.

As early as 1930, a former scout executive, expressing an attitude held by many critics, made public issue of the matter, writing reprovingly in a magazine of national circulation that scouting had turned from a robust outdoor game into a "parlor movement." Said he:

> Hiking today . . . is almost a lost art. . . . The boys ride to the appointed place in automobiles or a truck. . . . They take along chicken salad sandwiches, cookies, lady fingers, canned goods, thermos bottles, paper napkins—and a change of underwear. They regard scrambling an egg as cooking. . . .

Stressing another point of view held by various critics, he caustically censured the widening of scouting's base of sponsorship, which occurred during the 1920's, to admit strong backing from men's service clubs and business groups. Their predilection for organization and their commercial views, he declared, would surely prove detrimental to the movement as conceived by Ernest Thompson Seton and his school of outdoorsmen.[1]

In much the same way the uniform reflects liabilities as well as assets. While the khaki outfit is the obvious badge and always has been one of the great attractions of scouting, numerous youngsters reject it as "sissy" and many parents long have complained

[1] Tillery, Floyd, "Little Babbitts," in The Forum, December, 1930, pp. 338–342. See also Woodward, Horace C., "Sneering at the Boy Scouts," *Ibid.*, February, 1931, p. xxii. (A defense of the movement.)

that the uniform bears the mark of militarism. Again, the Boy Scout pattern of indoctrination and the detail with which uniformity has been worked out by the scouting organization have invited educators, social workers, and others with professional interest in child guidance to examine, challenge, and often to criticize the movement. Then, too, many contributors to social welfare object to the inclusion of scouting and other character-building agencies in community funds on the ground that such movements do not properly belong in "charity drives."

To deal with attitudes such as these, the Boy Scouts of America follows three main courses, all concerned with the reduction of frictional points in its public relations by direct or indirect means. The following discussions consider each separately.

First, we note how the scouting organization seeks to build public confidence by emphasizing the values of the movement. While less a means of meeting specific challenges than an application of the idea that people respect success, this process underscores the implicit faith held by men of the movement in its ideals, methods, and goals—and their hope of spreading the faith.

Second, we observe how the Boy Scouts of America polls and appraises public opinions affecting its operations.

Third, we see how specific steps are taken to overcome criticisms deemed unwarranted or particularly harmful.

I

The Scouting View of Scouting

Like matters of administration, public relations policies begin at home. To be effective they obviously must be keyed to public interests and public needs; but what and how an agency thinks of itself—of its role, methods, and manners—goes a long way to shape its course before the people.

Does the agency see its work performed best if detached from public notice, or does it seek a full measure of popular attention? Is it cautious about revealing achievements, or does it see value in airing them? Is it self-sufficient or is it dependent on popular support? What is the attitude of its leadership toward planned publicity? Answers to such questions often hold the key to the agency's public relations procedures.

Ever since the emergence of organized scouting in 1910, a tradition has grown within the Boy Scouts of America that the movement occupies a peculiarly unique place on the American scene. That attitude expresses itself in many ways. For instance, the Boy Scouts of America inclines to identify itself as a distinct movement in its own right. In comparing itself with other social agencies that seek to develop the character of youngsters and train them as good citizens, the scout organization emphasizes that its program is "very different." In much the same way, the National Council considers scout work as a specialized professional pursuit for which a man must be carefully selected and trained. Not the least, the Boy Scouts of America holds that service in

scouting calls for a crusader's zeal. As expressed in the following declaration by Chief Scout Executive James E. West, mere interest in scouting—by volunteer or professional—is not enough.

> There must be present in the hearts and minds of all of us who bear responsibility for the extension of Scouting a desire to render a worth while service to our nation. . . . We really believe in Scouting. We are conscious of the fact that here in our own country, yes in the community in which we live, there is daily evidence of the need of organized effort to build character and train for citizenship. . . .
>
> Because of our faith in the program and a knowledge of the need, should we not carry on as crusaders, with enthusiasm, with devotion, yes even with sacrifice if necessary, as those who are dedicated to a great cause. . . .[1]

Accenting Elements of the Scouting Story

At every turn therefore the abundant literature and publicity produced by the Boy Scouts of America "plays up" the unique opportunity of the movement to contribute to good citizenship. It reveals, too, a sense of pride in the capacity of scouting for growth and in the status it has achieved nationally.

Facts and figures are publicized to show the rapid gains in membership since the movement's first year of existence when only 55,000 Boy Scouts and 6,275 scouters were enrolled. Comparative figures reveal the recruitment records of each of the 12 scouting regions. Stress is laid upon the "overwhelming evidence that boys want to be Scouts."[2] Press releases

[1] Foreword to Local Council Manual on Organization and Extension. Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1940, pp. iii–iv.

[2] Local Council Manual on Organization and Extension, p. 27.

emphasize expressions of praise voiced about the Boy Scout movement by prominent individuals and report the numerous good turns that scouts perform.

In the same vein the services and achievements of Boy Scouts in World War II as salvage collectors, messengers, war bond salesmen, victory gardeners, and as willing workers in many other projects have received continued and extensive publicity from the national office. Dr. West was moved to say in his annual report for 1942 that the Boy Scouts of America during that year "took on and carried through a magnificent job in public service," with some twenty-eight different wartime projects "placed upon the doorstep of the Boy Scouts of America . . . by our Government."[1]

Membership recruitment brings forth a corresponding note of persuasive optimism; the scouter being reminded repeatedly that his is service of high merit. "Scouting's strength," he is told, "is recorded in growth. The way to make Scouting grow is to create a desire on the part of boys who aren't Scouts to become Scouts, and to maintain conditions so that increasing numbers of men of character and ability will desire to serve the Movement in a volunteer capacity."[2] During the war period of the 1940's leaders of the movement have been called upon similarly to recognize their "*primary obligation* . . . to make it possible for more boys to have the benefit of Scouting—to make Scouting grow."[3] Much the same spirit

[1] Thirty-Third Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1942, p. 9.

[2] Newspaper Publicity Helps. Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1942 series. (A publicity catalogue.)

[3] Thirty-Third Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1942, p. 58. Italics added.

also pervades publicity directed to the people at large. Consequently, the various public information materials tend to emphasize the established reputation of scouting, stress the superiority of the Boy Scout movement as a character-building force, present statistics to indicate the great numbers of boys who want, and ought, to be scouts, and reject or refute criticisms and comments that challenge arguments of this nature.

Such accent on the scouting story has in itself raised public relations problems, because various spokesmen and critics are prone to take issue with its implications. For example, the Boy Scout movement is criticized by many careful observers for emphasizing growth and expansion while according what they regard as secondary consideration to present-day standards and methods in education and group work. Expressions such as the following are voiced, which bear thoughtful examination:

1. Despite their admirable intentions, do not scoutmasters too often lack skills, training, and temperament for well-rounded leadership of boys in the troop? The enthusiasm which the volunteer scouter brings to his task might qualify him amply if the assignment were merely that of a teacher of scout lore. But the life of the boy in his troop is intended to penetrate so deeply that his whole character is shaped by the experience, and major responsibility falls to the adult. Yet, the selection and training of scout leaders, which are carried on amid intensive recruitment efforts, make little provision for such exacting service.

2. Does not the very emphasis which scouting puts upon its national prestige and numerical strength

have repercussions in local relationships with other agencies? On the one hand, the danger is ever present that the public may receive a distorted view of community social services and place a high rating on an agency that "sells" itself effectively, while underestimating another of no less importance which remains in eclipse. There are many possible points of friction here. Nor does the answer lie in competitive publicity among social agencies, but rather in careful interpretation of the individual agency. On the other hand, scouting is absorbed with objectives and methods of its own. Being virtually always well established in the locality and spontaneously respected by community leaders, the scout organization inclines toward an attitude of independence in its relations with other social agencies. This is revealed in participation to a lesser degree than many contemporaries in communitywide social planning and integration of related services.

Again, the claim to superiority for scouting's methods of character development is sometimes seriously opposed by social scientists, including psychologists, psychiatrists, and educators. An analysis of juvenile behavior, published in 1928, which represented Boy Scouts as neither more nor less honest than non-scouts—and which inspired a strong rebuttal by the scouting organization—is not an isolated example of dissent.[1] Nor is a study, published in 1941, which criticized Boy Scout educational methods on the grounds that they instill subservience in the youngs-

[1] Hartshorne, Hugh and May, Mark A., Studies in Deceit. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1928, pp. 362–367.

ter: a study considered at greater length in later pages of this chapter.[1]

All of which proves how those opposites, goodwill and disapproval, may stem from a common origin.

II

Measuring Public Attitudes Toward Scouting

The way to good public relations is paved with understanding, and that means cordial *and reciprocal* understanding between the people and the agency or organization. The importance of this two-way responsibility can scarcely be overstressed. It is hardly enough that the public in general, or any number of specific *publics*, know an agency and its operations. The story is but partly told unless the agency, in turn, adequately comprehends the nature of its publics and their attitudes, conceptions, and misconceptions about it.

Else, what is to keep even the most mature informational program from misguided effort: from emphasizing that which needs no emphasis or mistakenly brushing over points of friction? Conversely, what firmer foundation can be devised for sound public relations planning than knowledge of the field of operation?

Probably the most effective way to find out what the people think is the simple one of asking. And that is precisely what the Boy Scouts of America set out to do early in the 1940's when it began with new vigor and purpose to tap public opinion of scouting, to

[1] Nicholson, Edwin, Education and the Boy Scout Movement. Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1941. See also pp. 91–92 of this chapter.

check upon what the boy and the man in the street think about the movement, and to scrutinize many of its own long-standing methods of dealing with its various publics.

First Steps

To dig out and appraise public attitudes which affect the Boy Scout movement, the national organization reconstructed and enlarged its research unit and charged its researchers with a responsibility that previously had received only a minimum of administrative attention: to make *qualitative* as well as *quantitative* evaluations of scouting. Actually, this whole program was conceived as an administrative rather than a technical public relations matter, but its effects proved far reaching enough for both.

Four main objectives were charted, each embracing obvious public relations implications: first, to develop and encourage constructive criticism and creative inquiry throughout the movement; second, to help keep scouting informed of developments in boy life and boy leadership; third, to help keep the movement alert to major social forces and developments as they affect the Boy Scouts of America, and, fourth, to encourage and guide continuous evaluation of the administration and program of the scouting organization.[1]

While accomplishments during the formative years of this evaluation program were necessarily limited and the imprint made by research findings upon the broad public relations front of the Boy Scouts of America in that period proved modest, the efforts and results deserve further examination because of the

[1] Thirty-Second Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1941, p. 221.

newness of the trend in scouting and its bearing upon the subject of public relations planning.

Development of the Plan

Considered a natural, if belated, development in a movement of the proportions of the Boy Scouts, this program came into existence at a time when a stimulant to public understanding, and consequently to goodwill, promised to prove beneficial. There were various straws in the wind to indicate as much.

Wartime demands, both military and civilian, began to compete for the time and attention of adults and youngsters alike. It became clear in 1941, and was publicly acknowledged, that while enrollment continued its almost unbroken thirty-year rise, there was a drop in the rate at which new boys were joining. "For the past three years," the national office reported, "the Scout membership has been increasing at a decreasing rate."[1] Similarly, an increase in the number of new Boy Scout troops was overshadowed by a rise in the number of old troops going out of existence. All of which brought forth the scouting observation that: "An increasing total membership over a period of years may disguise underlying developments that are danger signals. Awareness of disturbing symptoms and their nature is an absolute necessity before appropriate steps can be determined and taken to deal with such conditions."[2]

Another significant "eye-opener" turned up in a survey of scouting made during the summer of 1940 in New York City. The results here indicated a surprising lack of information among men about the ob-

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 228.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 230.

jectives, activities, and influences of the Boy Scout movement and showed a forceful expression of opinion among boys—including scouts, former scouts, and non-scouts—that the scouting program needed certain changes if the interest of boys of scout age were to be retained. Made at the instance of scouters associated with the Greater New York Councils,[1] essentially for their own information, the study involved a total of 250 interviews with adults considered financially able to contribute to the support of the movement and 500 with boys whose ages ranged between 12 and 18. Dr. George Gallup supervised the poll.

Underlying this survey was an attempt to find answers to certain specific questions directly related to public understanding of scouting: (1) why more men do not contribute money to the Boy Scouts of America; (2) why more boys do not join the movement; and (3) why many Boy Scouts drop out of the ranks before reaching the age limit. Though the results were neither published nor distributed generally, they brought ample evidence to the scouting organization that further study of public opinion was desirable and more intensive interpretation of the movement, essential.

For example, the final report disclosed that despite the character-building, good-citizenship, and patriotic motives of the Boy Scouts of America, one-quarter of the men interviewed failed to recognize them and saw "companionship, pleasure, and sports" as scouting's only benefits to boys. Only 28 per cent of the men questioned stated specifically that in their opinion

[1] The local council, which was known until 1943 as the Boy Scout Foundation of Greater New York.

scouting builds character among boys. Only 4 per cent mentioned better citizenship as one of the gains to Boy Scouts.

Of the 250 men interviewed, 30 per cent frankly said they did not know what became of financial contributions to scouting, 35 per cent thought the money paid administrative expenses, 11 per cent believed it went for equipment, 4 per cent to build camps, and 8 per cent to "expand the movement." In short, three major reasons emerged for the failure of more men to contribute: lack of understanding of scouting's benefits to boys, unfamiliarity with all of the Boy Scout activities, and lack of information concerning the way the movement is supported.

From the cross-section of boy opinion also came disclosures of concern to the scouting administration. A total of 168 former scouts who were questioned gave various reasons for dropping out of the movement—they did not like scouting or its members or leaders; they tired of the activities; other affairs such as school and work conflicted; and so forth. But, according to the survey report, all replies pointed "to the need of changes in the scout program that will stimulate interest among boys in general." An equal number of non-scouts expressed similar reasons for not joining, their responses leading to the same conclusion. Again, said the report: "Almost two-thirds of all scouts are not completely satisfied with scouting as it now exists, even though many of them cannot say what they would like to have changed or added to the program." Given an opportunity to express their preferences from a wide range of boy activities, however, a majority of the youngsters, including scouts, former

scouts, and non-scouts, agreed upon three: camping, sports, and mechanical training.

Approach to the Scouting Publics

A series of inquiries more intensive than the "Gallup poll" was launched almost immediately after the newly constituted Research and Statistical Service came into being in 1941. Scouting thus began a direct and personal effort to learn from boys and adults in many parts of the country just what they thought about the Boy Scout movement and its methods and to study their attitudes toward boy activities and boy aspirations in general. "Flesh and blood supplementation" of information that formerly had been gleaned only from "ink scratches or typewriter marks on paper," it was called.[1]

More than 250 local research aides, some paid, many volunteer, were recruited to help on various studies. They included advanced students at several colleges and universities, lay scouters, and local council executives. Grants-in-aid were made to certain colleges and universities whose research faculties and students assisted in the surveys locally.

As a result, a flow of freshly tapped public opinion began to reach the national offices of the Boy Scouts of America, and even by 1943 the effects could gradually begin to be seen—though modestly—in some of its public information released nationally; in changes made and others planned in order to increase the effectiveness of the volunteer training program; in new interest in the Boy Scout movement detected

[1] Thirty-Second Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1941, p. 223.

among certain publics; and in other ways. The following examples indicate the nature of the studies undertaken.

The Troop Membership Study. Here three typical communities, Detroit; Springfield, Massachusetts; and Iowa City, Iowa, were chosen in which to seek answers to questions that already had been cropping up persistently: (1) What influences are most important in attracting boys to scouting? (2) How can these influences be made most effective? (3) What factors are most influential in leading boys to stay in scouting or to leave scouting after they have joined? (4) How can the "holding forces" be developed most effectively? "Strong" and "weak" troops were selected in each city; that is, some with good and others with poor records for holding members, and 20 part-time research assistants went to work in 1942 to piece out the story through personal interviews and observations.

For a period of three months the research workers —all of them college students—attended troop meetings; more than 100 sessions in all. Relying upon carefully sifted and well-rehearsed questions, they held some 400 interviews with Boy Scouts, former scouts who had dropped out of the movement, and other boys who never had joined, including lads who were notably popular, others in the middle ground, and still others considered least popular. Scoutmasters and parents of boys in each group also were interviewed. Informality was the rule. Perhaps a boy was questioned over a "coke" in a corner drugstore or a visit was arranged with the youngster or his parents at home. Supplementing this personal approach, a letter

went to members of each troop over the signature of the chief scout executive asking what appealed most and least in scouting.

In the end, the Boy Scout administration gathered numerous new facts and opinions bearing directly upon its program plans. These included expressions of approval as well as comments tinged with serious implications, such as the following, taken at random from interview reports. From a Boy Scout who objected to the monotony of the troop meetings: "They should do something different instead of the same thing every week." From former scouts: "You drill too much." "The scoutmasters talk a lot. They spend most of the troop meeting in talking to the boys." "The fellows (non-scouts) used to call us names like Girl Scouts; they didn't think too much of scouts." From a non-scout: "Scouts are like soldiers."

Boys in Wartime Survey. As in the membership study just outlined, an impressive collection of boy opinion—as well as adult attitudes toward youth—came out of a project called the Boys in Wartime Survey which polled some 700 persons. Here, however, the results were considered by many to have far broader significance and application for, instead of centering only on the subject of scouting, this survey also brought into the open some telling expressions concerning a number of citizenship problems. Its findings revealed, for example, what boys thought of their own war service activities and what they considered their proper role in World War II. The youngsters' opinions of American and Axis war objectives, of the enemy, and of minority groups and aliens in their own local communities were uncovered. Also recorded

were the views of Boy Scouts and scoutmasters alike toward democracy and authoritarianism in the scout troop.

Undertaken at the request of scouting leaders in New York and New Jersey, the survey was limited to those states. More than 150 specially trained volunteer interviewers went to work questioning a cross-section of Boy Scouts (including Cubs), non-scouts, parents, troop leaders, and general "community informants." When the returns were in, the Boy Scouts of America had, among other points of information, the following facts to consider.

A large majority of boys, 65 per cent of scouts and 57 per cent of non-scouts, wanted to tackle more important war jobs than had been turned over to them. Although recognizing the real significance of some of their services, including rubber and metal collections and war stamp purchases, they looked forward to assignments as junior air raid wardens, plane spotters, fire watchers, civilian guards, and even as war production workers in factories. They wanted to feel necessary; to know that they were being taken seriously as young citizens with a stake in the war effort. In this connection, the survey report stated:

> The observations of the 107 Scout Executives give rise to a question as to whether boy participation in the war effort shows signs of diminishing because of attitudes toward the activities in which they have been asked to participate.[1]

In respect to leadership and the scouts' attitude toward "being led," the study revealed that the demo-

[1] Scouting for Facts. Special Research Supplement. Boy Scouts of America, New York, November, 1942, p. 6.

cratic or non-democratic attitude of the scoutmaster largely determines the point of view of the boys on the subject. The results produced what Boy Scout research analysts termed "rather surprising" evidence of a willingness to waive the democratic pattern in the troop. Said the survey report in discussing Boy Scout war services:

> *A third of the Cubs and over half of the Scouts who are told "what to do and how to do it" ask for even more of the same type of leadership. The older boys show significantly more satisfaction with authoritarian leadership than the younger boys.* It can be seen rather clearly that the satisfaction of the boys with their leadership is not necessarily a sign that a good job of Scouting is being done.[1]

This conclusion tended to confirm certain criticisms, mentioned above, which some observers have made of scouting's educational and group-work processes.[2]

In addition to uncovering a pool of significant public opinion, the Boys in Wartime Survey made certain direct contributions to the public relations of the Boy Scouts of America. These were reflected in several ways. For example, newspapers gave considerable space and favorable attention to the views of Boy Scouts concerning their role in the war; one press service distributing the story nationally. The New York Times Magazine devoted two-thirds of a page to an illustrated article giving a sympathetic report of the plaint of the youngsters.[3] As an indication of reactions

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

[2] See pp. 73–75.

[3] Mackenzie, Catherine, "Need to Be Needed," in The New York Times Magazine, December 6, 1942.

in a community where a good part of the inquiry centered, a Utica, New York, newspaper carried a full-page illustrated account of the study in the same friendly vein.[1] Another public relations gain was noted in the enthusiastic interest shown by volunteer leaders who participated in the study or "belonged" to the councils and troops that figured in it. Similar reactions came from scouters in other parts of the country, in some instances amounting almost to a resurgence of interest in the activities of the movement. Finally, there was renewed evidence of increasing attention and approval from certain groups of social scientists and indications that some of the points of friction were smoothing out.[2]

III

Meeting Criticisms

The Boy Scouts of America never has entertained the comfortable illusion that all of its publics or all of the boys of the nation are solid supporters. Aware that the history of the movement is marked by a succession of criticisms, both hurtful and relatively innocuous, the leaders of scouting have relied instead upon various means to remove the stings and to clarify what they considered erroneous judgments.

[1] Utica Observer Dispatch, January 3, 1943.

[2] A report in Survey Midmonthly referred to the study findings in these terms: "This wealth of collected observations and opinions furnish a background against which further service programs can be more effectively launched and operated in the future, by the Boy Scouts or any other youth organization." And further: "The material should be useful in connection with the planning not only of war service programs, but of mass service activities of any type." See Himber, Charlotte, "Scouting Studies Itself," in Survey Midmonthly, March, 1943, p. 78.

Beyond the conscious effort to preserve the good name of scouting and Boy Scouts, however, no all-inclusive pattern is followed in meeting criticisms. In many instances reliance is placed upon the weight of scout literature; in others, upon the word-of-mouth support of its members. At times the scouting organization has undertaken sweeping studies to disprove harmful statements about the movement and has published reports and pamphlets about them. On some occasions men close to the Boy Scouts have risen as defenders. Since practices vary with the incidents themselves, a few illustrations are presented in the following pages to indicate their nature.

"*Militarism and Sissies*"

Here are two of the most persistent criticisms with which the Boy Scouts of America has had to contend: that it is military in nature and that scouting is "sissy." The first, as mentioned in Chapter I, The Making of a Popular Movement, received its original impetus in the early years when a good deal of public confusion arose over "peace-scouting" of the Boy Scouts of America and the military features of its strongest competitor. The uniform, first patterned closely upon the attire of the United States Army private but later modified, also contributed to this popular misconception. The enduring quality of an error is illustrated in the fact that the charge never has been laid to rest.

That Boy Scouts are sissies has been the complaint of many juvenile critics for almost as long. Certain public opinion surveys mentioned above revealed how it persists. Actually the Boy Scouts of America has

heard a good deal about it since undertaking a recent campaign to recruit boys in economically poor communities, or what the organization terms "less-chance areas." This challenge was acknowledged in a pamphlet for scouters which stated:

> Sometimes the assertion is made that the Scout Program as now constituted does not appeal to boys in less-chance areas. Often those who make the statement have actual first-hand experience upon which to base their claim. They point to the fact that boys in these areas call Scouts "sissies"; that boys who are Scouts do not like to wear the uniform, and are not interested in many of the activities.
>
> There would be little use in denying the fact that in some areas such attitudes do exist. The important thing, however, is to understand the way in which such attitudes develop and how they can best be dealt with. . . .[1]

Efforts to refute both criticisms have been varied, but much reliance has been placed in Boy Scout literature that stresses scouting as "red-blooded" and "a game." Year after year the annual report repeats that scouting is "neither military nor antimilitary" and states that: "As an organization the Scout movement is not military in thought, form, or spirit. The uniform, the patrol, the troop, and the drill are not for military tactics; they are for the unity, the harmony, and the rhythm of spirit that boys learn in Scouting."[2] This thought recurs, often in the same words, in handbooks, pamphlets, and releases directed to boys, leaders, parents, and the public in general. Scout speakers refer to it in their public addresses.

[1] Scouting in Less-Chance Areas. Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1939, p. 7.

[2] Thirty-Third Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1942, p. 3. Compare also earlier issues, including Third Annual Report, 1913.

Naturally, scouting activities are counted upon strongly to overcome such negative attitudes, especially among scouts, their families, and friends. The Boy Scout organization has noted, too, that the further it goes in recruiting "less-chance" youngsters, the less resistance it meets in those areas. Placing responsibility for leadership upon the boys themselves has netted returns in greater interest and acceptance.

Digging Out Answers to Critics

The extent to which the Boy Scouts of America may go to meet distressing challenges is suggested in the story of its elaborate two-year study launched in 1927 to test scouting as a character-molding force. In that instance the National Council considered statements made by two nationally known spokesmen as too disparaging of the movement to stand unanswered and set out to find how far wrong—or how nearly right—they were. Judge Benjamin B. Lindsey, who only a few years earlier had voiced high praise of the Boy Scout movement,[1] now stated publicly that his experience on the juvenile court demonstrated no superiority in character on the part of scouts as compared with other boys. Professor Mark May of Yale University contended that psychological tests brought him to the same conclusion.[2] Similar comments at the time by other prominent persons helped to bring the issue into focus.

Obtaining a grant of $12,500 from the Commonwealth Fund and matching it with the same amount raised from other sources, the Boy Scouts of America engaged Professor Henry P. Fairchild, of New York

[1] See p. 24.

[2] See p. 74.

University, to head the inquiry. He received full responsibility to ascertain the extent to which the movement was succeeding or failing in the achievement of its major objectives — the development of socially useful character traits and the building of good citizenship habits in the Boy Scout. Whereupon, the study branched into two separate problems: Do Boy Scouts, in fact, display a higher level of character and conduct than boys of similar ages who are not scouts? If so, can scouting be held accountable for the difference?

A complete report of the origin, methods, and findings of the survey appeared in a pamphlet published in 1931 by the Boy Scouts of America.[1] Briefly, however, here is what occurred. A total of 917 case studies was made of representative scouts and non-scouts living in 11 communities chosen at random and representing all sections of the United States. A trained field worker was assigned to each community, and in order to make a definite appraisal of character development it became his responsibility to build up a personal acquaintanceship with each youngster under study. Testimony of school teachers, clergymen, scoutmasters, social workers, probation officers, and other adults supplemented field observations. Juvenile court records were consulted and carefully weighed. A number of scientific measurements were carried out.

In the end scouting received one high mark and one question mark. First, the study proved "positively and beyond contradiction" that Boy Scouts as a whole are superior in character to non-scouts. Second,

[1] Fairchild, Henry P., Conduct Habits of Boy Scouts. Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1931.

however, the director held that the answer to the question whether scouting was accountable for the difference could be only "a qualified one." Said the report:

> It is quite certain that not all of the superiority of Scouts can be attributed to their Scout membership. Scouts as a whole are a selected group. . . . It is just as possible that high character may be a cause of Scout membership as that Scout membership may be a cause of high character. It is just as possible that favorable influences may be the cause of high character as Scout membership. . . .[1]

The Volunteer Speaks Up for Scouting

In view of the strong support that scouting enjoys among volunteers, it is not surprising to find some of the stanchest champions of the movement in that diversified and powerful group. One incident, heightened in importance by the nature of its public airing, is illustrative.

That issue arose several years ago when The Commonweal, a magazine in the religious field, published a controversial book review. The critic not only disapproved of a new book written by a Boy Scout executive, but took occasion to denounce the character-building aims of the Boy Scout movement as conflicting with those of the church.[2]

Soon afterward, the Very Rev. Msgr. Edward Roberts Moore, a well-known Catholic clergyman and a leader in the Boy Scout movement, took issue publicly. In a Commonweal article covering much more

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 50.

[2] Palmer, John, "Debatable," in The Commonweal, October 26, 1934, p. 625.

space than the original piece, he presented a firm statement in praise of the Boy Scouts of America, its character-building program, its attitude toward religion, and its educational and recreational activities. Insisting, indeed, that it is incumbent upon the church to extend increasing support to the movement, he added the challenging comment: "Scouting is here, and, whether we like it or not, is here to stay. Personally I like it. I think it has a lot to offer."[1] The article later was incorporated in a pamphlet and published by the Boy Scouts of America's Catholic Committee on Scouting for general distribution.[2]

Disposing of an Issue Quietly

A final example is one which again saw the pressure of the volunteer scouter come into play but involved no publicity for the process. Indeed, so expeditiously was it handled that after bursting publicly in a manner highly unfavorable to the Boy Scouts of America, the incident completely subsided within a week.

Public attention focused on it briefly in 1941 when The New York Times published a lengthy news report of a study that analyzed the social and educational foundations of the Boy Scout movement. Under the headline, "Boy Scout Training Seen Ineffective," the article told how a volunteer leader of many years' standing in scouting had just completed an examination of Boy Scout methods and found them wanting in many respects; how he felt that "by employing emotional conditioning and indoctrination rather

[1] Moore, the Very Rev. Msgr. Edward Roberts, "What Is a Boy Scout?" in The Commonweal, January 4, 1935, p. 279.

[2] Why Be a Boy Scout? The Catholic Committee on Scouting, New York, [1941].

than promoting intellectual insight, the Boy Scout movement runs the hazard of making its members subservient and pliant to the will of others and thus potentially docile to totalitarianism."[1]

Scout leaders in the national office immediately took steps which helped to forestall the spread of the story. It was not so much that the newspaper failed to quote the study report accurately. Rather, the news account was considered to emphasize certain findings out of their relation to the whole—findings with which the Boy Scouts of America heartily disagreed.

After conferring on ways to meet the issue, professional and lay scouters together arrived at a decision to forego a public reply. Instead, some of the scouting leaders consulted the author of the study who shared their concern over the treatment. The attitude of the scouting organization was made known to the newspaper, and a few days later a short item appeared which wrote an end to the affair. Said this story in part:

> A report of a study of the Boy Scout movement by Dr. Edwin Nicholson in The New York Times last Sunday presented an erroneous impression of the study through emphasis on criticisms, Dr. Nicholson said yesterday.
>
> "My study was about 85 per cent favorable to the Boy Scout movement and 15 per cent critical," he declared. "The Times story quoted criticisms and thereby gave the impression I opposed the Boy Scout movement.
>
> "The study agrees with the ultimate aims of the Boy Scout movement. . . . I believe in the Boy Scout movement or I would not be in it."[2]

[1] The New York Times, March 30, 1941. See also footnote 1, p. 75.

[2] The New York Times, April 6, 1941.

Conclusion

Thus, we have seen some of the major considerations playing upon the public relations of the Boy Scouts of America: first, the views of the administration about the role of the Boy Scout movement and its own responsibilities in that connection; second, the efforts made to find out what the people think of scouting, and, third, reactions to criticisms. Any agency or any social movement may well study such factors from its own point of view, for the three of them bear strongly upon the kind of relations existing between an organization and its publics.

Leaving such matters of policy and procedure, subsequent chapters deal with media of publicity and interpretation as the Boy Scout movement uses them.

CHAPTER VI

LITERATURE RELATED TO THE PROGRAM

OF THE NUMEROUS public information media available to a social agency in the national field, the Boy Scouts of America places greatest reliance upon the printed word in its own publications. And this emphasis conforms to the particular character of the scouting movement.

Liberal use is made of various additional channels and devices of publicity, including press, radio, motion pictures, exhibits, and others. But none forms a part of the Boy Scout program in the same way as scout publications. Handbooks, manuals, pamphlets, leaflets, and periodicals that make up a vast and ever-increasing fund of scouting literature are, first—and predominantly—"tools" of scouting; second, devices designed to promote the growth of the movement. Their very appreciable value in helping to create wider understanding and goodwill for the cause stems from these considerations.

Publications for Scouting

Item by item and as a whole, Boy Scout literature is keyed to special audiences, to individuals who either have some established relationship with scouting or may be expected to do so. In general the intended readers are made up of the following groups: Boy Scouts and prospective scouts; adult leaders, both professional and volunteer; sponsors of scouting and

individuals and agencies that may be expected to fall into this category; parents and friends of boys who are in the movement or may join. Few publications of the Boy Scouts of America, therefore, are aimed at so wide a body of readers that they fail to bear the imprint of one or another of these publics, although exceptions are to be found, such as certain promotional pieces and the annual reports which are considered later in this chapter.

Indeed, Murray in his official history of the movement emphasizes that "It has been necessary to develop a distinctive library of Scout Publications, because no other books that were available, exactly met the needs of Scouting." And again:

> No single piece of Scout literature has ever been developed, that did not have back of it, the fundamental objectives of the Scout Program, even though the manual in question might deal with a wholly technical subject. The basic principles in all Scout publications are, first, that such literature be in harmony with the principles of Scouting; second, that it make available the best technical information that could be procured, and third, that such publications should be within the reach of the means of the average boy and leader.[1]

Scouting publications are classified by the national organization into three types: *training helps*, *promotional helps*, and *program helps*.[2] Although they tend to overlap, there is to be found within these groupings an output of printed materials so extensive and so diversified that, in the words of the first chief scout

[1] Murray, William D., The History of the Boy Scouts of America. Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1937, p. 391.

[2] Thirty-Third Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1942, p. 109.

executive, the Boy Scouts of America "had to go into the publishing business" to supply it.[1] Also significant here is the fact that many of these publications are contributions of recognized authorities in such fields as camping, craftsmanship, and citizenship training and consequently find fairly general use as source information. Often they succeed in reaching readers outside the movement itself where materials more promotional in nature might fail.

Scope of the Output

A bookshelf of Boy Scout literature would include virtually everything on the subject from four-page folders to 700-page bound books. There would be pamphlets dealing with many vocations and almost any hobby or sport a boy could think of; game books and song books; biographies and adventure yarns playing up the romance of scouting; volumes informing parents of the good things their boys get, or could get, from scouting; others for men who volunteer, or might be impelled to volunteer, time and money for such a romantic character-building program. There would be magazines, leaflets, booklets, and full-length volumes detailing all attractive phases of the movement; describing means of co-operation between the Boy Scouts of America and other established organizations and agencies; explaining administrative procedures; presenting testimonials by notable citizens who believe in supporting the movement as well as reprints from publications similarly inclined. Finally, there would be annual reports covering more than 600

[1] Thirtieth Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1939, p. 286.

small-type printed pages, minutely detailing the activities of the movement.

A typical year is marked by the output of a whole range of new works, revisions, and reprints for the various scouting publics. The Boy Scout By-Laws set the pattern for this process, stating:

> Official handbooks and other manuals and pamphlets shall be prepared for the purpose of setting forth the scope, aim, and principles of Scouting; the plan of organization; the various requirements and such information as will be helpful to boys and men in carrying out the Program. *They shall serve as textbooks of the Boy Scout Movement* and may be revised from time to time as experience shows that improvements can be made and as advice is received from the members of the Committee on Badges, Awards and Scout Requirements and Uniform Design, National Merit Badge Counselors or other qualified experts.[1]

What all of this means in terms of volume is indicated in figures made public in 1943 which covered the preceding year when some 20 new publications and 120 revisions and reprints were issued, exclusive of periodicals. Common in the "new" list were such production totals as 20,000 copies of a pamphlet describing and illustrating the tying of knots and 40,000 copies of a manual prepared in conjunction with the United States Office of Civilian Defense as a training guide for youngsters serving as wartime messengers. Reissued items were computed in such figures as 220,000 copies of three "Cub" books describing the younger-boy program and 171,000 copies of 71 revised "merit badge pamphlets." Meanwhile, the keystone of all

[1] Constitution and By-Laws of the Boy Scouts of America, as Amended to February 16, 1939, p. 38. Italics added.

scouting literature, the Handbook for Boys, passed an all-time mark of 8,300,000 copies, representing 36 different printings over a period of 33 years, and, as has long been done, the Boy Scouts of America continued to describe the volume in these terms: "Since it was first published in 1910 . . . the country's best seller, with the exception of the Bible."[1]

While no emphasis upon printing economy is apparent—tools and promotional items alike commonly appearing in two or more colors with numerous pictorial illustrations—it nevertheless is notable that an appreciable amount of the output lacks the touch of the finished writer. It is plain that the national organization has drawn heavily for its authors upon men versed in the techniques of scouting, irrespective of their literary proficiency, and often has been willing to sacrifice concise and lucid writing in the process.

Periodicals

The Boy Scouts of America publishes eight different periodicals which range all the way in purpose and appeal from a magazine of top importance in the national juvenile field to house organs for the comparative handful of professional scouters. Some are popular in tone, others technical. Some play up the romance of Boy Scouting and others stress the methods of the movement or show ways in which scouting may be made increasingly effective. By and large they are "tools," and if one or two feature entertainment and fiction slanted for any boy, whether or not a

[1] Handbook for Boys. First Edition, Thirty-Sixth Printing. Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1943, p. 4.

scout, their function is none the less to build the interest of boys and men in scouting.

The two major magazines in the field are Boys' Life, directed to all boys of scout age, and Scouting, which serves as the official publication for adults in the movement. Both are monthlies, and the circulation of each approximates one-third of a million copies per issue. Not only do these two publications reach into every Boy Scout troop and into countless thousands of homes throughout the nation; their importance to the Boy Scouts of America is heightened because both are impressive business enterprises. Boys' Life in particular stands up in the income-producing class, as evidenced by its record for 1941 when total revenue exceeded $430,000 (out of which production and operating costs were deducted), including a net advertising income of nearly $200,000. Scouting during the same period produced a net advertising revenue of over $13,000.[1]

Boys' Life indeed holds a position unique in the Boy Scout movement. Operated in competition with many American magazines that seek youthful readers, it functions as a full-scale national publication. While the other seven scouting periodicals are turned out by regular members of the headquarters staff along with other assignments of work, Boys' Life employs professional editors, writers, and artists. It buys articles and stories. It maintains national advertising representatives. It sells to readers outside as well as within scout ranks. And the niche which the magazine

[1] Figures vary from year to year. In 1942, for instance, the total revenue from Boys' Life dropped to approximately $393,000, and advertising to $154,000, while Scouting's net advertising fell to about $12,000.

has secured for itself has been proudly hailed by the national scouting organization in these words:

> During 1939 one of the foremost national magazines conducted a survey among a selected group of American youths which revealed that Boys' Life stood third among all the national publications in popularity with boys, and first by a very wide margin among the publications edited especially for boys.[1]

Though addressed to youngsters outside as well as within the ranks of Boy Scouts, this monthly magazine conforms to the character-building formula of the Boy Scouts of America precisely as any other publication in the list. Officially, it is intended to provide "wholesome stories and other material of interest and educational value which will stimulate ambition and help in character development of boys. All stories and material shall be in harmony with the principles of Scouting as laid down in the Scout Oath and Law."[2] To accomplish these ends, Boys' Life presents articles, fiction, features, photographs, and sketches in which adventure, sports, scoutcraft, patriotism, and humor are featured. And within recent years it has begun to dress itself with modern typography, layout, and general eye-appeal typical of popular "smooth-paper" magazines.

How Boys' Life and other scouting publications are marshaled to support the activities of the movement is illustrated in a war-inspired program launched in 1942: Air Scouting. Even before the entry of the United States in World War II the Boy Scouts of

[1] Thirtieth Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1939, p. 295.

[2] Constitution and By-Laws of the Boy Scouts of America, as Amended to February 16, 1939, p. 46.

America, aware of the rising interest of boys in aviation, started to explore this field as a possible place for a program activity to rank with Sea Scouting. Reflecting the trend, Boys' Life presented articles, stories, and pictures about airplanes and airmen. With the country reaching new heights of air-mindedness after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the time was at hand for the new Boy Scout program, and it arrived, supplemented by a well-integrated output of literature on the subject.

While other scouting periodicals gave support, Boys' Life led the way in playing up the interest of boys in aviation, and almost every issue in 1942 contained an article, a feature, or photographs dealing directly with the Air Scout program, telling an air-adventure story, or highlighting the life of a hero of the air. At the same time, new merit badges were developed for Air Scouting. Four new merit badge pamphlets on airplane design and aeronautics were printed, initial orders running to a total of 60,000 copies. A pamphlet describing the program went through four printings and 35,000 copies before the end of the year. A new 440-page Air Scout Manual exceeded a sale of 20,000 copies within two months. Meanwhile, as Air Scouting grew, aviation continued to receive considerable attention in Boys' Life.

Scouting identifies itself as "a magazine of information and ideas for all scouters," and as such is directed to all registered adult leaders in the movement. Thus, its audience is composed principally of volunteers, to whom it goes as an automatic benefit of membership. This publication of some 30 pages provides tips on the planning and performance of the

numerous Boy Scout program activities and assists, as the By-Laws express it, "in a uniform interpretation of the Scout Movement and its policies."[1]

Contents are factual and tend to be factually presented, with a good deal of stress laid upon things boys do as scouts. Subjects such as camping, nature study, cookery, aquatics, first aid, games of all sorts, the care and use of outdoor equipment, the conduct of troop meetings, and others receive continual attention; usually from the point of view of how they may be carried out efficiently and interestingly for the youngster. Many photographs and line drawings season the text and, as in the case of Boys' Life, greater eye-appeal recently has been injected into the magazine.

Monthly periodicals naturally possess the virtue of timeliness that less frequent publications lack, and the Boy Scouts of America is able to capitalize on it. During the period of World War II, for example, a section called "Scouting and the War" has become a regular feature, and virtually every issue of Scouting carries articles and pictures that keep step with—or even a jump ahead of—Boy Scouts in the war effort. Such self-descriptive titles as the following have appeared: Sea Scouting Serves the Nation; Boy Scouts and Food for Freedom; Unrationed Food for Your Camp; and Scout War Service.

Most of the material in this publication is written by men in the movement; members of the national staff as well as local council representatives. Articles usually are not purchased. The production job rests entirely in the hands of the Editorial Service, a na-

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 38.

tional staff unit which serves as a clearing house for all written and printed materials issued by scouting headquarters, the director of which is editor of the magazine.

From the standpoint of editorial policy, the type of copy that goes into any issue of Scouting or the slant it deserves rarely presents a problem to the editor. And that is true of any periodical bearing the imprint of the Boy Scouts of America. The fact is that the point of view of the movement is firmly impressed upon members of the national staff, partly because many staff men either have come out of the ranks of Boy Scouts or volunteer scouting or through long service have "grown up" with the movement as it has grown with them; partly because of a training program which provides a concentrated orientation course in scouting for every new professional scouter; partly because of a zealous enthusiasm for the Boy Scouts of America which radiates from the chief scout executive and permeates the staff; and partly because program emphases are developed in conference by the national staff at the beginning of each year, and the work of every unit of the organization is carefully integrated into the whole.

Following is a thumbnail summary of the other regularly issued Boy Scout periodicals, with circulation figures as of mid-1943:

1. Cub Leaders' Round Table, an 8-page monthly for adults serving as Cub leaders; circulation, 66,000 including a paid list of some 2,000 "Cub parents" and others interested in the program; produced by the Editorial Service in co-operation with the Cubbing Service.

2. Local Council Exchange, a bi-monthly, digest-sized magazine of some 48 pages for local council leaders and volunteer workers; circulation, 22,000; produced by the Educational Service with the co-operation of the Editorial Service.

3. Health and Safety, an 8-page bi-monthly for Health and Safety Committee members in each local council, scout executives, and local council presidents; circulation, 13,000; produced by the Health and Safety Service with the co-operation of the Editorial Service.

4. The Scout Executive, an 8-page monthly for the professional staff, intended as a morale builder and a running source of information about scouting developments nationally and locally; circulation, 2,000; produced by the Personnel Division with the co-operation of the Editorial Service.

5. Lone Scout, a 4-page monthly for Rural Scouts and their leaders; circulation, 7,500; produced by the Rural Service with the co-operation of the Editorial Service.

6. Scouting For Facts, "an occasional bulletin of information and interpretation," of some 12 pages; circulation, 2,000. Produced by the Research and Statistical Service with the co-operation of the Editorial Service.[1]

Handbooks, Manuals, Pamphlets, and Leaflets

Varied and continuous as the magazine program is, the production of handbooks, manuals, pamphlets,

[1] Also published until suspended in 1943 was the National Sea Scout Log, a 4-page bi-monthly for adult leaders in Sea Scouting. Circulation reached 6,700 copies.

and leaflets outstrips it in both respects. The output in new works, revisions, and reprints already has been indicated for a typical year, 1942, when nearly 150 different items came off the presses.

The greater part of this fund of literature, which numbers well in excess of 500 separate pieces, is needed by the boys and men in the movement as they participate in one phase or another of the scouting program. Much of it serves to guide Boy Scouts in their advancement from rank to rank.

Standing alone as the most honored—as well as the most necessary—single piece of literature produced by the Boy Scouts of America, the Handbook for Boys, covering some 650 pages, serves as a model for a whole classification of scouting manuals. Issued originally in 1910 as the first major publication of the organization, the Handbook in the course of its many revisions and reprintings has continued to be the source book for Boy Scouts in all aspects of scouting lore and procedure, in fundamentals of such sciences as botany and ornithology, in health and safety, and in the many other facets of the scouting program. A number of other handbooks have followed, with the result that each principal scouting activity has its similar guide and reference: cubbing, sea scouting, and air scouting among them. The handbook library also includes volumes for adults, with separate books for scoutmasters and scout executives.

Second to handbooks stands the Merit Badge Library, composed of well over 100 illustrated pamphlets of uniform size and style, each containing upward of 35 pages. Every publication in this series is devoted to a specific subject, such as indicated by

these representative titles: Bird Study, Chemistry, Photography, Public Health, and Civics, and each corresponds to a distinct activity of scouting. Directed to boys, they form important reading for any scout who climbs into advanced ranks. The application is simple. A scout earns "merit badges" which signify his familiarity with scoutcraft and his proficiency in scouting. To do so, he must acquire an understanding of any merit badge subject he elects, and for that he depends upon the Merit Badge Library.

Three score or more illustrated pamphlets similar in format and subject matter, though generally of somewhat wider interest than those of the merit badge series, make up a Service Library. Scout Plays and Troop Stunts are typical titles. Again, a series of illustrated paper-bound books for adult leaders in local councils appears under the general designation, Local Council Manual. With new volumes added from time to time, seven had been published by the end of 1942. Each covers one subject, such as Health and Safety; Camping and Activities; Finance; and Leadership Training; and provides the lay participant with source information about Boy Scouts and scouting.

Finally in this selection of examples are "take-me-home" folders. Turned out more or less continuously, these leaflets briefly describe the scouting program in its various aspects. As their descriptive name suggests, "take-me-homes" are designed for general local distribution and intended to tell parents and other persons interested in scouting just what the movement is all about. What Is a Boy Scout?; High Adventure

—The Scout Hike; and Dividends of Scouting are typical titles.

Promotional Literature

Differing essentially in their promotional point of view from publications already described, pamphlets and manuals of still another type are aimed specifically at membership recruitment. Most of them are directed to such actual and potential sponsors of Boy Scout troops as church groups or civic and fraternal organizations, though some serve to instruct and encourage local scouting organizations toward the same end.

Outstanding examples include three standard manuals: The Scout Program in Protestant Churches; Scouting for Catholics, and Scouting and the Jewish Boy, whose total distribution by 1943 exceeded 100,000 copies. Prepared in collaboration with leaders of each sect—and in the case of the Catholic manual by two priests who were graduates of Boy Scout ranks—these publications not only present a picture of the purposes and methods of scouting but offer detailed instructions for establishing troops and describe the benefits to be gained by the church or synagogue. Scout leaders state that clergymen and local Boy Scout executives alike have found them useful and instructive. The scout executive in one city reported that a copy of the appropriate manual is supplied to all ministers, priests, and rabbis in that community for their personal libraries.

A similar but more general pamphlet issued in 1943, entitled Starting a Boy Scout Troop, went not only to churches but to local clubs, parent-teacher

associations, and other agencies throughout the country, and met with an equally cordial reception. Other publications are turned out every year in conjunction with organizations such as the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the United States Junior Chamber of Commerce and distributed jointly by them and the Boy Scouts of America to prompt local affiliates to increase the sponsorship of troops.

Annual Reports

As an organization chartered by Congress, the Boy Scouts of America is required—and privileged—to submit a full report of its activities every year to the House of Representatives; "privileged" because these very complete records are published in full by the United States Government Printing Office and, further, enjoy the benefit of free mailing. It is a position almost unique among private social agencies.

The annual reports comprise minutely detailed summaries of scouting operations, nationally, regionally, and locally. Each of the many departmental units of the national staff contributes its own record of plans and accomplishments, with the result that every program and every subdivision of a program receives consideration, and scores of pages are devoted to graphs, charts, and tables. As impelling reading, these annual publications have their limitations, however, for the sheer volume, coupled with solid pages of small type, would tend to cool the average reader. Yet, they contain a large part of the story of the movement, and they are presented in the nontechnical language of the layman.

In addition, a digest is carried every year in one

issue of Scouting, the periodical for scouters. In 1943, for example, this popular version of the report covered eight pages of the magazine and included many photographs and pictographs highlighting main features of the year's activities.[1]

Dressing Up Reports. Under a fairly recent plan to brighten all scouting literature, a successful effort was begun in 1941 to improve the readability of annual reports. Starting in that year, a scout-theme painting was reproduced on the front cover of each issue. Pictographs, which had been used sparingly for a few years, now appeared in considerable number throughout the publication. The most notable change of all, however, showed in the text which was condensed and sharpened by the elimination of much repetitious information that previously had crept into various departmental sections, and this trimmed the length of the annual report by a quarter. Thus, the 1939 edition covered 597 pages and the 1940 issue, 612, while in 1941 and 1942 the totals ran to 478 and 431 pages, respectively.

Advertising and Sales Materials

With a twofold responsibility, first, to promote the sale of Boy Scout equipment ranging from handbooks and magazines to uniforms and duffel; second, to produce a wide assortment of posters, leaflets, and other promotional publicity for local councils, one business unit in the headquarters office, the so-called Supply Service, continually turns out literature of yet another type: advertising and sales materials. Centered

[1] Scouting, May, 1943, pp. 7–14.

here is a good deal of effective interpretation of the movement.

The Boy Scouts of America markets a vast array of Boy Scout merchandise and engages in big business that requires many of the same merchandising techniques employed by commercial firms. In 1942, for example, the net sales of all scouting goods amounted to more than $4,270,000. After all costs of production, administration, and promotion were deducted, an income item of $353,000 remained which represented over 20 per cent of the total net income of the national organization for the year—$1,726,000. All of that necessitated vigorous advertising and promotion, and in handling the job the Supply Service produced a variety of printed matter which included 2,750,000 pieces of general promotional literature; 1,245,000 additional pieces relating wholly to Boys' Life magazine, and advertisements, catalogues, folders, and fliers counted by the hundreds of thousands. While each item of sales literature is designed primarily to further the purchase of goods, virtually every one also plays an interpretative role, with special pages or sections devoted to pictures and descriptions of scouting at its romantic best.

The second part of the job, the production of promotional materials for sale to local councils, emerged several years ago to meet an expressed demand. "For many years," the national office explained, "local councils have needed materials to assist them in conducting and promoting Scout circuses, merit badge shows, camporees, finance campaigns, district rallies, and similar activities. The expense of art work, cuts, and printing in small quantities has made it imprac-

tical for this material to be developed locally."[1] Whereupon, responsibility fell to the business unit in which a staff artist and skilled copywriters already were engaged in similar assignments. The yearly output includes multi-color posters of many sizes, folders, stickers of various sorts, illustrated covers for such purposes as programs and dinner menus, and other items.

Keeping Literature in Step with the Times

In view of the volume and variety of Boy Scout literature always in the planning or production stage, the question arises: What and who determines the need?

Substantially, the answer is contained in the broad scouting program itself, for the output of most material relates directly to the numerous activities of the Boy Scouts of America. Thus, it may be decided by the administration, in collaboration with the proper lay committees, that a new merit badge will be added, say for radio. Whereupon, a pamphlet on radio must be produced for the Merit Badge Library. Or the Service Library pamphlet on archery, in use for some time, is found to be out of date; its illustrations perhaps outmoded. A complete revision is ordered.

In the area of promotional literature as well, the program—that is, the promotional program—is a governing factor. When, for example, the Relationships Service needs a selling booklet in any one of its several fields of operation: religious, educational, civic, fraternal, business, or labor, it produces one. Or when the Reading Program Service wishes a leaflet or

[1] Thirtieth Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1939, p. 288.

pamphlet to aid in its established task of promoting the reading of good books among scouts, it likewise prepares one.

A positive barometer of need is provided in requests and comments from the field. Local council executives and committeemen are vocal and they report either directly to headquarters or through the national field staff, which is a large and busy one.

Another method for determining need was created in 1939 in what was designated a "review of literature" under which all scouting publications are subjected to continual evaluation. It then became the responsibility of the Editorial Service to examine every Boy Scout publication regularly; to determine what revisions, if any, are essential; to decide when new manuscripts are needed and whether routine reprints are in order; to recommend the discontinuance of outdated items. No minor assignment, this responsibility has expanded with the growing recognition of the scouting administration that Boy Scout literature must be made more attractive and appealing if it is to compete successfully with all top-quality reading now published for boys as well as adults. The job has become virtually one of remaking the face of the entire body of scouting publications.

Reflected here is a public relations factor worth underscoring in the pattern of any agency: the need to keep literature attuned to the times. Despite its great natural audience and the fact that scores of handbooks, manuals, and pamphlets constitute required reading for scouts and scouters alike, the Boy Scouts of America learned that modern treatment is indeed necessary. This self-appraisal is significant:

It is important that material used in the promotion of Scouting—whether directed at boys, at leaders, at sponsoring institutions, or toward finances for local councils—be kept timely and attractive. . . .

It is our effort to improve our publications as they come up for reprint along two lines—first, condensation; second, readability. Effort is made to streamline each book and pamphlet, eliminating duplications and condensing as far as possible. It is the aim of the editorial service to develop better books and shorter books. . . .[1]

Further, this wartime observation of the need for better scouting literature:

In busy war days, brevity and readability are more important than ever before.[2]

Producing and Distributing

As evidenced in the foregoing discussions, no central unit of the national organization produces all scouting literature. Handbooks, manuals, pamphlets, leaflets, and periodicals feed into the stream from numerous sources both within the headquarters office and outside. The key Editorial Service meanwhile functions as co-ordinator of planning, editing, and production.

Members of the national staff contribute much of the material but that is supplemented from several other sources, including special writers employed for specific assignments; lay committees or writers engaged by them; scouts and scouters as voluntary contributors; sponsoring agencies and organizations; local councils; and the American press in general.

[1] Thirty-Second Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1941, p. 109.

[2] Thirty-Third Annual Report, 1942, p. 109.

Indeed, the Boy Scouts of America is alert to use or to adapt every possible piece of favorable publicity. Thus, a Saturday Evening Post editorial describing the Boy Scout movement and its wholesome character-building objectives became the basis of a "take-me-home" folder entitled, More Good Scouts. A good-humored, informative character sketch of a typical Boy Scout was reprinted from the New Yorker magazine as a 12-page pamphlet, Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly. Similarly, when the Greater New York Councils (then known as the Boy Scout Foundation of Greater New York) developed a dramatic, pictorial pamphlet contrasting totalitarian youth movements of Europe with the Boy Scouts, the national office acquired publication rights and distributed 30,000 copies in 1939 under the title America's Answer. And finally by way of example, the Boy Scouts of America has contracted with a national calendar publishing firm for rights to Norman Rockwell paintings used by the company in illustrating a series of scout-theme calendars. These Rockwell paintings have appeared on many posters and pamphlet-covers produced by scout headquarters and issued through regular scouting channels.

Comparatively few publications are distributed by the national office without charge, though many are sold to local councils for use as free distribution pieces. Most "tools," of course, are bought by scouts and scouters, and prices range from 25 cents a copy for merit badge pamphlets to 50 cents for the Handbook for Boys and up to $3.00 or more for various other books and manuals. Boys' Life is priced at 20 cents a copy, or $2.00 yearly. Scouting costs 50

cents a year, a sum automatically deducted from the $1.00 annual registration fee paid by all adult leaders.

In general, the local council serves as the major point of distribution. It is there indeed that the movement "meets the people" and the literature of the movement reaches the hands of the scouting publics.

Local Council Output

Not only do local councils absorb quantities of Boy Scout literature, however. Most of them add to the total by producing leaflets, bulletins, and other informative items for use in their own communities.

Actually, local council output is variable, both in purpose and in scope. One of the nation's large and highly successful councils, for example, issues no more than a mimeographed monthly bulletin to report highlights of its activities to some 850 lay leaders. For promotional purposes it depends almost entirely on materials bought from national headquarters, considering "take-me-home" folders, the three major church manuals, and similar pamphlets superior to anything comparable that could be turned out locally —and less expensive. Here, too, Boys' Life, Scouting, and the other periodicals rate well. In compliance with national office wishes, the sale of the former is actively promoted among Boy Scouts of the community.

On the other hand, a smaller but equally successful local council in another section of the country places somewhat less reliance upon nationally produced materials and more upon its own. Among its publications are a semi-monthly mimeographed bulletin for scout-

ers; leaflets publicizing its special events; and digests of pertinent information taken from sources such as the Handbook for Boys. Many national items are used, of course, and considered highly effective. However, according to the scout executive, many others embody too much material of little value to scouting in the smaller community and are too costly for general use.[1] The problem is met by the production of substitutions, a task that falls mainly upon the executive himself.

[1] Personal interviews, 1941.

CHAPTER VII

THE PUBLICITY PROGRAM

In 1911, at the height of its first public relations crisis, the Boy Scouts of America established a press service and engaged a newspaper man to run it.

Favorable public opinion was at stake. Not only were several rival scouting organizations competing for attention, but some of the first informational literature published by the Boy Scouts of America had contained unfortunate implications which many persons considered unfriendly to labor groups. The situation demanded clarification, and a public reporting service appeared to be at least part of the answer. Consequently, "news bulletins" and other "items of interest" were turned out regularly during that early period of organized scouting for newspapers, magazines, and religious publications throughout the country. Before long the National Council was spending what then reached the sizable sum of $5,000 a year for publicity, and tangible results began to show.

Scouting was news in those days, as it is today, and the record showed it. In 1912 the national office reported gathering in a total of some 35,000 press clippings about its Boy Scout program. That its own efforts helped to shape the news is borne out by the fact that "nearly 6,000" of those items were based

on its releases.[1] So was laid the foundation for the Boy Scout publicity program.

How the Boy Scouts of America emerged successfully from its first brush with public opinion; how its prestige mounted and its membership rolls rose by the multiple thousands; how the Boy Scouts of America soon became *the* Boy Scout movement; all are matters of history.

While a planned program of publicity accounted directly for no more than a modest part of the results, it is one whose importance the national organization never has minimized. Indeed, when early critics within the movement itself questioned the advisability of such a program, James E. West, the first chief scout executive, made a strong defense of it, declaring:

> . . . It should be remembered that all efforts to date to secure a better understanding of the Movement through newspaper, magazine, and other publicity methods, have been based on the necessity for action to meet the interests of the boys who desire the benefits of the Scouting program and because of the further responsibility to the parents and to the general public to warn them against irresponsible leadership and imitation Scout movements, which, if allowed to go unchecked, might have proven a serious setback for the development of real Scouting, as we now have so well established in this country.[2]

A full generation later, another national executive long associated with the scout movement observed that "a planned program of publicity had much to

[1] See Second Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, New York, 1912. Also, Third and Fourth Annual Reports, 1913 and 1914, respectively.

[2] Fourth Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1914, p. 31.

do with scouting's present prestige. Its prestige, in turn, enables it to realize even more publicity than it pays for."[1]

Telling the Scouting Story

As the Boy Scout movement matured and developed, the purposes and methods behind its planned publicity tempered considerably. It became unnecessary to "sell" the Boy Scouts of America and the things it stands for, because in a real sense scouting began to sell itself, and has been doing so ever since. The elements of the Boy Scout program proved powerful enough of themselves to rouse public attention and interest. As a result, it has not been a program of publicity so much as the inherent color, the symbols, the all-important oath and code of laws, the emphasis upon scouting as *a game*, the integration of the movement into community life, and the endless news-making activities of scouts that have served to make the Boy Scout a familiar subject on the American scene.

Today, therefore, the national publicity program is keyed somewhat more toward supplementing the news of the movement than initiating it; and the most characteristic feature of the output is that it reports and publicizes events which make up the year-round schedule of scouting activities.

Two other factors help to set the tone, and both bear importantly on the national publicity pattern. First, every local council is a fountainhead of publicity in its own right; which means that some 550 Boy Scout organizations in communities throughout

[1] Goodman, E. Urner, personal interview, 1940.

the land engage continuously in publicizing the movement. Second, the complexities that surround the interpretation of so many social work programs do not exist here. Because so little is demanded of it in the way of cautious interpretation, virtually all Boy Scout publicity is "good" publicity.

Indeed, the story which the Boy Scouts of America seeks to tell is, essentially, the romance of scouting, a story simple in structure and detail and uncomplicated by exacting social problems. It pertains mainly to the things boys learn and do as scouts: to matters such as scout rallies, camping experiences, and demonstrations of skill and training; to community services, neighborly acts of kindness, and national good turns; to good health, character-building, and patriotism. When any part of the scouting program is publicized through the press or other channels of public information, the story is being told; the Boy Scout movement is being interpreted to the people.

Of course, it is obvious that scouting competes for space in the press and for consideration from other informational media precisely as any agency or movement that is publicity-bent. There is no ready-made formula to assure results for anyone in terms of newspaper stories, magazine articles, radio programs, motion picture coverage, or public response, and many an event that the Boy Scouts of America seeks to publicize—even some of the major ones—fails to hit the intended mark. Yet, its receptivity and its generally favorable public relations inevitably stand the movement in good stead, and it reaps abundant rewards in effective publicity, with the dramatic results indicated in the following example:

"A Scout Is Loyal"

Special Correspondence

> Manzanar, Calif., Dec. 10.—The American flag never came down during the recent disturbances at the Japanese relocation camp here, director Ralph P. Merritt has revealed. Fourteen Japanese-American boy scouts surrounded and defended it against attacks of pro-Axis internees.
>
> Merritt said the boys, armed with stones, surrounded the mast when trouble started and defied any Axis sympathizer to come near. Only one did and he was stoned into retreat.[1]

It is against this background that the present publicity program, one of fairly extensive dimensions, is maintained by the Boy Scout organization.

Scope of the Program

From the point of view of publicity planning, one noteworthy feature of this program is the care with which the job has been defined and assigned. The term *publicity program* suggests a formal pattern for the development and production of public information, and the Boy Scouts of America meets this measure by blocking out the objectives and content of its planned publicity, determining the audiences it seeks to reach, and assigning with some exactness the professional workers charged with the responsibility. The results amount in many ways to a publicity blueprint.

[1] The Newspaper PM, New York, December 10, 1942. Copyright 1942, by Field Publications. Reprinted by permission of the Newspaper PM.

The assignment is centered in a department composed of a director, some four or five technical assistants, and a staff of five or six clerical and manual workers. Here is maintained the principal point of contact between the agency and the established channels of public information throughout the country: newspapers and syndicates, magazines, radio stations and networks, and newsreels and motion picture companies. Here, too, are turned out the informational materials designed to publicize the scouting story. Although given the name *Public Relations Service*, its functions, as will be seen in subsequent discussions, bear predominantly upon one aspect of public relations: publicity.

Indeed, its alignment in the scouting organization suggests as much, for the Public Relations Service stands on a par with such production and program units as the Editorial Service, Educational Service, and other services concerned in one way or another with problems of interpretation. None commands a direct-line relationship to the chief scout executive or the administrative leadership. The set-up serves to emphasize also that, in reality, public relations as an assignment is shared by the entire national staff of the Boy Scouts of America, with the substantial support of local councils and the widespread corps of local executives.

Nevertheless, there is significance in the Boy Scouts' use of the designation Public Relations Service, as it marks both a break from the past and a look into the future. In earlier days the scouting organization called it "publicity" and employed one or two newsmen at a time to devote major attention to press

relations. Rebuilding the department in 1936 in the midst of a large-scale Boy Scout recruitment program, the National Council equipped the new service with increased staff and budget, gave it greater responsibility, and adopted the broader title "to dramatize scouting's new deal in publicity," as scout executives have expressed it.[1] Further, "public relations" bespeaks the point of view of the department director who envisions a bureau of wider scope than has so far developed.

Two major responsibilities fall to the Public Relations Service: to produce and release informational materials nationally; and to provide publicity assistance to local councils. In a well-rounded definition, the Boy Scout By-Laws describe these duties—and, in effect, the whole publicity program—as follows:

> Promoting public acquaintance with, and an understanding of, the objectives and activities of the Boy Scouts of America, stimulating public interest in, and developing support of, the Movement, and building cooperation in carrying out the program in all parts of the United States of America and territories or countries subject to the authority thereof, by circulating general publicity concerning the Boy Scouts of America, and aiding Scout Executives with public relations material and with public relations methods.[2]

In practice, the output of national publicity receives much the greater share of attention. While assistance to local scouting organizations has increased gradually in recent years, it has taken the form mainly

[1] Personal interview, 1940.

[2] Constitution and By-Laws of the Boy Scouts of America, as Amended to February 16, 1939, p. 39.

of fairly general information distributed in either of two ways: as mimeographed handbooks and memoranda dealing with publicity and public relations methods and the use of media, or as newspaper releases, radio scripts, mats, and other publicity materials, keyed usually to the very broad scouting public rather than to specific audiences in the home communities.

Whether distributed nationally or locally, however, the lion's share of all planned publicity of the movement relates, as suggested above, to the year-round events which form an integral part of the scouting program. Over a period of years the policy-making National Council has developed a calendar of such events through which scouting presents itself to the public, and these are supplemented as the occasions warrant with timely activities that draw the participation of scouts throughout the country. At the start of each year the national staff lays out the projects ahead, and the Public Relations Service builds its schedule of work accordingly.

Thus, scouting stages its traditional Boy Scout Week to commemorate the founding of the movement, its annual meetings, its spectacular pilgrimages, and other set occasions; each one against a background of generous publicity. Special events may take such form as the National Jamboree, held in 1937 under the patronage of the President of the United States; one of the most impressive occasions in the entire history of the Boy Scouts of America—and one of the most productive in publicity—when scouts from the whole nation assembled for ten days' encampment in Washington, D.C., and were joined

by visiting scouts from countries overseas. During the war years of the 1940's they have centered in salvage collections, distribution of war-bond and air raid posters, spirited "victory garden" drives, and similar demonstrations; each achieving wide publicity through all available national media.

Every local council maintains a similar schedule of events, which coincide in some instances with the national program, but usually pertain to matters of local concern such as scout circuses, camporees, courts of honor, and others pitched to the interest of the home community. Publicity for these occasions, of course, becomes a matter of local responsibility.

Finally, as indicated in the definition quoted above, the planned publicity of the Boy Scouts of America is directed to a public, or to publics, quite general in nature. As such, it differs sharply from the movement's interpretative and information materials produced for other purposes. It will be recalled, for example, that most scouting literature, including handbooks, manuals, periodicals, and pamphlets, is slanted toward selected audiences. That is one of its distinctive characteristics. Here then are reflected at once the character and the purposes of Boy Scout publicity: *It constitutes simple reporting of the scouting program and is successful when it keeps before the American public the name of scouting and the program activities of the movement.*

Describing the essence of the publicity program in other terms, one ranking scout executive stated that the Boy Scouts of America seeks to accomplish two ends through its Public Relations Service: (1) to impress boys with the fact that scouting is a game,

playing up the romantic side of the movement so they will know about it and wish to become scouts; (2) to convince adults of the character-building values of scouting and thereby gain their support in general interest, in volunteer service, and in contributions of money to the movement.[1]

Publicity Through the Press

The Boy Scout publicity pattern follows fairly conventional lines which are especially adapted here and there to fit the requirements of the Public Relations Service. Greatest emphasis is placed upon three established informational media: newspapers, radio, and motion pictures. The output of exhibits and displays comes in for considerable attention. Beyond that, however, the production of materials and the use of other publicity devices contrived to tell the scouting story to the public taper off.

Very much as in the earliest days of the movement, it is the press that receives prime attention. In 1941 the publicity department was able to report: "Very favorable newspaper coverage was indicated during the year by the more than 50,000 clippings [received in the national office]. . . . This is estimated to be about 10 per cent of all newspaper lineage."[2] The total included stories and pictures based not only upon national news releases, but those stemming from local councils and other news sources as well.

Sixty or more major news stories and features are released from national headquarters in a typical

[1] Personal interview, 1940.

[2] Thirty-Second Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1941, p. 124. No specific figures are available to confirm this estimate.

year, and these are supplemented by scores of other items that range from suggested newspaper editorials to ideas for Boy Scout cartoons, articles signed by leading scouters, one-sentence "fillers," and newspaper mats picturing personalities in the movement. In most instances the message relates to one or another of the events and activities on the scouting calendar, though other matters receive attention as well; perhaps a story playing up the 127,000-acre camp owned by the Boy Scouts of America in the Rocky Mountains or another reporting a Boy Scout research study such as the very significant Boys in Wartime Survey which became the basis for a well-received release issued early in 1943.[1] Relatively few contain "spot" news or urgent information.

Actually, an unusual method employed by the Public Relations Service to distribute newspaper material allows little consideration for spot news coverage, and it tempers the kind of writing that goes into the copy. While many agencies rely upon press services and syndicates to distribute the greater share of their national news, striving for favorable reception with timely releases, the Boy Scouts of America follows the relatively expensive practice of blanketing the newspapers of the country by mail.

Virtually every national scouting story is distributed not only to press services but to a total of some 2,000 dailies and 6,500 weeklies, including a cross-section of foreign language newspapers throughout the country. The copy is identical. Little if any effort is made to shade or to play up regional interests or to differentiate between urban and rural points of view;

[1] See pp. 82–85.

nor are translations provided for the foreign press. Ordinarily, all releases bearing on a particular event —such as Boy Scout Week—are sent together in batches timed to arrive in newspaper offices from coast-to-coast approximately a week in advance of the occasion. Identical "kits" of newspaper copy are sent to local councils, principally for their information, since the national office depends upon its own distribution system to cover the press. In some instances an executive in the home community may incorporate a local angle and re-release a story to papers locally—but the practice is not followed universally or regularly.

Although this plan of news distribution amply meets the requirements of the Boy Scouts of America, it also presents various problems. First, copy shaped to meet the demands of the whole American press must be written in general terms; never localized. Second, as suggested above, timeliness is forfeited and with it, certain sharpness of detail. Third, it has been demonstrated that releases issued from national headquarters suffer a considerable rate of mortality, since local newspapers in their constant quest for local angles incline to reject general information.

The last point was indicated clearly in a study of scouting publicity appearing in The New York Times during six months of 1941. Undertaken by the research staff of the Boy Scouts of America at the request of the Public Relations Service, the check-up showed the following results:

1. Copy sufficient to fill 317.8 column inches was released to the newspaper.[1] 2. Of that amount, 67.2 inches

[1] A full 8-column page of The New York Times contains approximately 168 column inches.

appeared in print, and all but 5.8 inches dealt either with obituaries or "individual recognition" (spot news). 3. Meanwhile, The Times carried 621.5 inches of material dealing directly or indirectly with the Boy Scouts of America—a difference of 554.3 inches obviously made up from local council releases and other sources of news available to the paper. 4. "At no time during the period studied did The New York Times evidence any hostility toward the Boy Scouts either through editorial comment or selection of news matter."[1]

One local council executive in a large midwestern city has offered an interesting evaluation of the use and significance of national press releases. By far the greatest part of Boy Scout news appearing in the daily and weekly papers of his city is locally inspired, he said, and virtually no releases mailed directly from national headquarters are published. Yet, the executive saw a major benefit to scouting in the national pattern because, "Published or not, such copy keeps saying to the city desk: 'Boy Scouts of America.'"[2]

How the national press material delivers the story of scouting is indicated in the following examples taken from the files of the Public Relations Service.

Below is the lead of an advance story announcing Boy Scout Week, 1940:

The nation's 1,330,000 Cubs, Boy Scouts and their leaders will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the incorporation of the Boy Scouts of America in a week's observance beginning Thursday, February 8.

Boy Scout Week is the most important week in the Boy

[1] Study of Publicity on The Boy Scouts of America Appearing in The New York Times, an unpublished manuscript prepared by the Research and Statistical Service, August, 1941.

[2] Personal interview, 1941.

Scout calendar and nine million present and former scouts and leaders will join the celebration which this year has as its theme, "Scouting—the American Way." . . .

The following news story was released for publication during Boy Scout Week, 1943:

"Toughen Up! Buckle Down! And carry on to Victory!" has been chosen as the theme for this year's Boy Scout Week, which marks the 33rd Birthday of the Boy Scouts of America. Special emphasis is being placed on all those Scout activities which build physical health, mental alertness and moral strength for growing boys. . . .

Approximately 400,000 Boy Scouts are aged fifteen or over, and it is entirely possible that they may see military service before the conflict ends. Army chiefs have praised Scout training as ideal pre-induction preparation. . . .

The theme is designed to make better soldiers and sailors —as well as better citizens—by emphasizing the outdoor hikes, camps and cruises which develop stamina. . . .

A suggested editorial of approximately 200 words, distributed to newspapers throughout the country for use in connection with Boy Scout Week, 1943, read as follows:

In 1918, the Boy Scout Movement in America was only eight years old. Today—and this is Boy Scout Week—it is 33. The important difference to the Nation at War is apparent when one realizes that in Uncle Sam's great Army, 25 per cent of the selectees are former Boy Scouts. . . .

The Boy Scouts of America is not a military organization. The ideals for which it stands are the antithesis of militarism. But Scout training produces men—men of character and decency, men who cooperate for the common good, men who have known Freedom in the fields and on the waters. . . .

Referring to several notable American heroes of World War II, the release continued:

> Colin Kelly was a Scout. So were John James Powers, John Bulkeley and "Butch" O'Hare. Scouting's roll of honor lists countless more. "Be prepared!" was *their* motto, when they were Scouts. We honor them, and their example, when we share with today's Boy Scouts another birthday of their organization. May it live long and wax mightily, for the good of us all!

Publicity by Radio

Regarding radio as one of its most potent publicity outlets, the Boy Scouts of America spends liberally in time, effort, and money on this medium. Not only is radio employed to publicize important scouting events, but strong efforts have been made since the later 1930's to enlist local councils in the task of building up a year-round program of interpretation by air in communities throughout the country. As yet, however, the record of accomplishment in the local field suggests only that the plan is in a state of development.

Broadcasts are designed to keep the name and the thought *Boy Scout* before the people and to report, as opportunities present themselves, on the activities of the movement. How the job is carried out can best be seen by way of examples.

The National Pattern. Although circumstances vary both in peace and wartime, the Boy Scouts of America is likely to "land" from one to several network broadcasts and numerous local broadcasts on at least three or four occasions each year. The most certain and generally the most successful of them all is the

celebration of scouting's anniversary, staged against a nationwide background of community meetings, demonstrations of Boy Scout skills, fanfare, and felicitations.

Planning, preparation, and release of publicity for Boy Scout Week consumes approximately three months' work every year by the Public Relations Service, and not the least of it goes into radio. The result is an anniversary-week broadcasting schedule that shapes up something like this: A coast-to-coast program over all major networks featuring an address or greeting by the President of the United States and participation by other scout leaders; reference to the celebration and to the Boy Scout movement on 200 to 300 commercially sponsored network broadcasts, both preceding and during the seven-day event; hundreds of "spot" announcements over radio stations throughout the country; human interest stories and news reports of Boy Scout Week by commentators and newscasters; and programs of considerable variety, including talks, interviews, and dramatizations on local stations with Boy Scouts and scouters usually participating.

The publicity highlight of the week—and the major attraction of scouting's entire year-round radio calendar—is the Presidential broadcast. Initiated in 1934, this occasion not only has afforded the means of reaching a vast listening audience with the scouting story, but provides an outstanding news event which commands attention of the press and other channels of public information that "cover" the activities of the President of the United States.

The nature of this Boy Scout Week message is re-

vealed in the following excerpts from the address of President Roosevelt in 1942; an address read by Vice-President Wallace when exigencies of war prevented a personal greeting from the chief executive and honorary president of the Boy Scouts of America.

Fellow Scouts and Scouters: I have great pleasure in extending congratulations and good wishes on this, our thirty-second anniversary. . . .

The record of Scout service to our country during the past critical year fully justifies the confidence which I expressed in my message to you on February eighth of last year. Much more will be asked of the Boy Scout as we go forward with our program to preserve our liberty and to bring peace on earth through complete victory over our enemies. I have full confidence that the Boy Scouts will effectively meet every request made of them. Each and every Scout has reason to feel proud of the part he has as a member of Uncle Sam's team to help us win the war . . . .

Although we are at war and the immediate emergency situation dominates the life of the Nation, the American people should continue to be on the alert to meet their responsibilities to our youth. We must make sure that those volunteer agencies which are supplementing the church, the home, and the school by providing training programs that will help equip the present generation to cope with life problems in the difficult days ahead, are maintained to their maximum capacity and effectiveness.

On the same program, as has become customary practice, the president of the Boy Scouts of America delivered an annual report to the nation on the status of the Boy Scout movement, and the chief scout executive led the unseen audience of scouts and scouters in a recital of the scout oath.[1]

[1] Thirty-Second Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1941, pp. 72–73.

While arrangements, preparations of talks, and other details of this Boy Scout Week broadcast are responsibilities shared by several ranking executives of the national staff, the Public Relations Service acts as liaison between the Boy Scouts of America and the White House secretariat and handles all relations with radio companies. Obviously, however, the wide range of anniversary week radio programs, as well as other special broadcasts during the year, consumes almost endless attention of the staff assigned to publicity. Radio talks and dramatizations are turned out for local council use. Spot announcements and news releases are written. General publicity is prepared. Radio interests of many kinds are asked personally and by correspondence for co-operation, and special materials are produced for their use in paying tribute to scouting: entertainers, dramatic actors, musicians, commentators and newscasters; advertising agencies; networks, local stations and their key staff members. Following the same pattern employed with press releases, the Public Relations Service also mails kits of radio material covering each major scouting event to the networks and more than 850 local stations and supplies local councils with similar collections.

As indicated in this discussion, all Boy Scout programs are "live" broadcasts; transcriptions or records have not been used. All network programs inspired by the Public Relations Service fall, generally, into three types: (1) talks, ordinarily picked up from meetings or other special gatherings; (2) spot announcements and news highlights; (3) references to scouting, woven into commercial entertainment shows. Similarly, local broadcasts inspired by this service and

staged with the co-operation of local councils usually are talks or interviews, dramatizations, or spot announcements.[1]

Despite the historic emphasis of the movement upon "peace-scouting," it is suggestive that the war years of the 1940's have seen the national organization veer from a portrayal of scouting as robust, rollicking, and full of fun for the youngster to color its publicity materials with a serious war slant. That can be seen in news releases quoted above, as well as in the following typical spot announcement prepared for Boy Scout Week, 1943:

> No general sends green soldiers into battle. Training comes before fighting. Toughening up is an essential part of training. This is Boy Scout Week, and "Toughen Up! Buckle Down!" is the emphasis, reminding every Scout that he has to train hard if he is to be the kind of citizen Uncle Sam expects.

Serving the Community. As brought out in the foregoing account, the Public Relations Service supplies an abundance of prepared radio materials to local councils. In connection with special events, whether they be Boy Scout Week, a wartime "Food for Freedom" (victory gardening) campaign, or others, radio copy is general in nature, consisting mostly of proposed talks for Boy Scouts and scouters, messages of

[1] From time to time the Boy Scouts of America collaborates with other social agencies to interpret programs of mutual interest. An outstanding instance occurred in 1944 when the scout organization, through its Public Relations Service, joined nine other national youth-serving agencies to present a series of radio dramatizations over the National Broadcasting Company. Entitled Here's to Youth, the series dealt with wartime problems of boys and girls.

greeting from scout leaders in the United States and Britain, and announcements of various sorts. The Public Relations staff is able to write virtually all of it.

The contribution of the national office to year-round radio interpretation in the home community takes the form mainly of fictional dramatizations of scouting incidents. More than 30 different scripts have been made available in a single year, some of them written in the service, others purchased from free-lance writers or acquired here and there from scouters with a writing bent. The response around the country has proved variable, however.

Even though the Public Relations Service reported distributing more than 12,000 such scripts among local councils during 1942 and stated that over 300 councils used its output more or less regularly in 1943, Boy Scout dramatizations have so far failed to win enthusiastic reception from numerous local councils and radio stations. Whether this situation arises because script writers often are chosen by the national office more for their understanding of scouting than skill in developing dramatic action and dialogue or because stories are leveled to the amateur acting abilities of Boy Scouts and their leaders or for other reasons, is not certain. Various scout leaders agree though, that as yet no effectual countrywide plan of interpretation by radio has developed. On the whole, Boy Scout radio programs produced locally reflect the individual initiative of scout councils or radio stations, and not infrequently, community chest publicity personnel as well.

Motion Pictures

Within recent years the Boy Scouts of America has entered actively into two film fields: (1) promoting Boy Scout sequences in commercial movies, both dramatic and newsreel; (2) producing and distributing scouting pictures of its own, primarily for sale or rent to local councils. Reflected here, on the one hand, is an enthusiastic awareness that motion picture producers often *want to portray Boy Scouts* and should be encouraged to do so; and on the other, that films of its own, developed for picked audiences in home communities, provide not only an excellent avenue of interpretation of scouting but a profitable supplement to the training program directed to scouters, scouts, and others who share in the activities of the movement.

The Commercial Field. The lad in the khaki uniform has long been a favorite subject in the movies. He has appeared in dramatic stories of many kinds, and in countless newsreel shots. In 1941 Warner Brothers announced that he even was to be made the subject of an "A" picture depicting the romantic development of the movement, and James E. West, chief scout executive, hailed the achievement as "the first time that a million dollar production has ever been put into effect in the cause of Scouting. . . . A picture that will not only entertain but will be a real contribution to the American ideals of democracy, freedom and equal opportunity for all."[1]

It was with the threefold idea, (1) of strengthening the liaison between the Boy Scouts of America and

[1] Thirty-Second Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1941, p. 55. The Public Relations Service said in 1944 that the picture had been deferred for the duration of the war.

the motion picture industry; (2) affording the national organization greater opportunity to initiate Boy Scout episodes in entertainment films; and, (3) providing expert scouting counsel to the studios, that an assistant was added to the Public Relations Service staff in 1940 and assigned to work in Hollywood. While his services have supplemented the broad-scale efforts of the headquarters office, other long-standing assets also contribute notably to the portrayal of scouting in films for entertainment. One of them is the cordial relationship that has prevailed for years between the movement and the industry; another, the fact that several members of the lay committee on public relations are themselves motion picture executives and producers.

Assets such as these show their effects constantly, and one instance is presented briefly by way of illustration. It was in 1939 that the local council in New York City originated an idea for a dramatic, documentary picture to contrast scouting, the American way of conducting a youth movement, with totalitarian regimentation of youngsters in European countries. Taking their plan to the March of Time, the local scouters met with success. The upshot was a film, produced under the title, "Young America," and released at the most opportune of moments—the start of Boy Scout Week.

A success with theater audiences throughout this country and in democratic nations overseas, the picture was considered by the Boy Scouts of America "to be one of the most effective pieces of Scout propaganda ever developed." Moreover, the national office published this significant comment: "Noticeable

membership increases in many sections of the country were attributed to it, at least in part and it was of great help in financial campaigns."[1]

Subsequently, the Public Relations Service obtained distribution rights for non-theatrical purposes. Prints in 16 mm. size were made available on a rental basis to local councils and were shown over a period of three or four years.

Pictures for Scouting. Since 1936 the Boy Scouts of America has built up a library of films for non-commercial showings which cover most major activities of the movement. A few pictures have been produced by the national organization. Others have been collected from such varied sources as commercial newsreel companies, the United States Department of Agriculture, the British Information Service, and certain local councils that have turned out amateur and semi-professional films to portray their own programs. Though some do not feature Boy Scouts as such, they at least deal with matters of concern to scouts and, consequently, are considered valuable as training material. A sound picture produced by the United States Forestry Service to illustrate fire-fighting methods is one example.

These movies are available to local councils, or through them to individual troops in home communities, and may be rented or purchased. The national office urges that they be shown before church groups, parent-teacher associations, business men's organizations, service clubs, and other adult gatherings, as well as to youngsters in schools, at conferences, and other meeting places.

[1] Thirtieth Annual Report, Boy Scouts of America, 1939, p. 168.

Entire responsibility for the program, which bears the designation "Visual Education," has been placed in the Public Relations Service, and its growing importance was evidenced in 1942 when a staff member was added to give full time to the assignment.

While the production of original pictures has received some attention during the formative years of this program, the promotion of rentals and sales has proved one of the more important functions of the staff assigned to publicity. To this end, the Public Relations Service periodically issues a mimeographed bulletin to stimulate bookings by local councils. The nature of scouting pictures is indicated by a glimpse at one of them.

In April, 1943, for example, a total of seventeen 16 mm. movies and one 35 mm. set of slide films was offered to local councils. Included were both color and black-and-white prints; sound-and-silent versions. They ranged from a 31-minute sound-and-color subject dealing with senior scouting to a 10-minute black-and-white short depicting British Boy Scout activities during the 1940 air raids over London. Others dealt with cubbing, rural scouting, camping, the training of Canadian Army pilots (considered valuable background to the new Air Scout program), and related subjects.

Exhibits and Displays

Supplementing the three media employed most liberally to publicize scouting, exhibits are used fairly extensively by the Boy Scouts of America but for somewhat more limited purposes.

Through press, radio, and motion pictures, the

national organization is interested in reaching the entire American public. It lowers its sights for exhibits and directs them more specifically to publics with some pre-established interest in scouting; not the least of which is made up of professional and volunteer scouters themselves.

Despite the breadth of the exhibit program, it is quite simple in detail. In the first place, it follows the general publicity pattern of the national office in that some special displays are turned out strictly for national purposes; others to be lent or sold to local councils. Second, new exhibits related to the year-round schedule of scouting activities are built every year. Third, an exhibit unit exists as a part of the Public Relations Service where, under general supervision of the Public Relations director, an assistant is given a rather free hand to develop displays as he sees the necessity for them. Some twenty years in the employ of the Boy Scouts of America provide the head of the exhibit unit a comprehensive understanding of the organization, its purposes, and program. Technical skills in draughtsmanship, photography, and layout—many of them learned on the job—enable him to follow through.[1]

An exhibit is designed to portray things scouts do as scouts. It may highlight camping, first aid, air scouting, troop meetings, or any of a number of other activities. In size, it may assume the proportions of a large diorama depicting many aspects of the scouting program, complete with figurines, colorful backdrops, and descriptive lettering; or be built as a roll-up panel

[1] Advertising and sales materials, including placards and posters are produced by the business staff of the Boy Scouts of America. See p. 109.

convenient for shipping to councils and to meeting places about the country.

One of the principal uses of such material is at meetings and conferences of scout leaders. In 1941, for example, one hundred crates of exhibits and displays were shipped from national headquarters in New York to Washington, D. C., where scouters assembled from all parts of the country for the annual meeting of the National Council. Others were shown that year at several additional scout gatherings, as well as before the Garden Clubs of America, the National Defense Show and the Sportsmen's Show in New York, and similar public events elsewhere. In 1942 a record was established when 138 exhibits were dispatched throughout the country for all purposes, including loans to local councils.

The Rest of the Publicity Job

To describe fully all other operations of the Public Relations Service is to go into greater detail than is warranted in this discussion, especially as many of them merely involve the mechanics pertaining to the Boy Scout publicity pattern. For example, a good deal of time is devoted each year to checking and renewing the nationwide mailing lists of newspapers and radio stations: a responsibility arising from the method of distribution followed by the national office.

In rounding out the publicity picture, therefore, it is sufficient to indicate some of the additional duties carried out by the Public Relations Service. Thus:

1. It produces occasional publicity handbooks for local councils. Typical of the output are two recent

items, both mimeographed and both widely distributed throughout the country. The first, called Broadcasting Scouting, offered 48 pages of basic information about radio techniques and their application to the scouting story. Issued in 1943, it was written by a professional scouter with considerable practical experience in staging Boy Scout broadcasts in Milwaukee. The second, a sheaf of 33 pages, appeared in 1942 under the title: Opportunities Through Public Relations to More Effectively Promote The Boy Scouts of America. This one discussed publicity media in general and their values to the scouting program.

2. It maintains a file of photographs portraying scouting subjects and scout personalities and makes them available to local councils. Some pictures are made by the exhibits director, others are gathered from scout councils, commercial firms, or other sources. It backs up this service with a wide assortment of newspaper mats touching on similar subjects. More than 64,000 mats were sent to local councils upon request in 1942.

3. While turning out very few publicity pamphlets or folders of its own—that being a responsibility charged to other national staff units—the Public Relations Service distributes pertinent materials of the sort, both to local councils and to channels of public information with which it deals. In 1942, for example, a packet of three such pieces attained countrywide distribution: one a reprint of a page that appeared during the year in Time Magazine reporting on "Boy Scouts at War"; the second, a four-page leaflet containing a laudatory statement about the

Boy Scout movement, presented by a radio commentator, Arthur Hale, over a national network; the third, a reprint of a Boy Scout character sketch from The New Yorker Magazine.

4. Within limitations of staff time, it seeks to place Boy Scout articles and pictures in nationally circulated magazines. Various other program units of the national staff also share in this responsibility; the Relationships Service, for instance, being able in its work with churches to place Boy Scout material in religious periodicals. Altogether in 1942, 86 magazine articles dealing wholly or in part with scouting were counted by scout headquarters.

5. Finally, the director of the service devotes major attention to personalized public relations or "cultivation." This involves consultation with, and demonstrations of friendship toward, such persons as newspaper and magazine editors, radio executives, theatrical and radio stars, business executives, professional leaders, and others. Periodically, he sends a Boy Scout knife, a scout handbook, a plaque, or some other typical scout item to these key individuals. Many a line of radio dialogue has been devoted by such radio stars as Fred Allen, Jack Benny, and Edgar Bergen to Boy Scout knives received in this fashion.

It may be noted that public speaking as a defined publicity device does not figure in the responsibility of this service—nor, indeed, of any other unit of the national staff. As will be seen in the concluding chapter, this function is related more definitely to general administration than to publicity.[1]

[1] See p. 154–155.

Cost of the Publicity Program

The Boy Scouts of America has come a long way in expanding its publicity efforts, and the expense has increased more than twelvefold since the early days of the movement. In 1942 the Public Relations Service spent an all-time record of $63,385.

How much the outlay for publicity has risen even since the Public Relations Service came into existence in 1936 is indicated in the following figures. In that initial year publicity expenditures totaled $15,637; in 1938, $35,228; and two years later, in 1940, $49,046.

A comparison of costs run up by other national staff units which share responsibilities of interpretation in one way or another, shows these results:

Editorial and literature production:

1936	$17,043
1938	22,484
1940	25,796
1942	35,435

Education Service, Relationships Service, and volunteer training, combined:

1936	$26,282
1938	37,206
1940	45,538
1942	46,530

Producing Publicity Locally

Few local councils employ full-time publicity or public relations technicians; perhaps fewer than a dozen in the entire country. Yet, virtually every local scout organization carries on an active job of pub-

licity; if not on a year-round basis, at least in connection with its more important events.

While it is not possible here to present a complete story of publicity efforts in home communities, certain of its essentials can be outlined. Probably most important is the fact that the publicity assets of the Boy Scout movement prevail wherever scouting exists. The things youngsters do as scouts are just as attention-compelling and equally newsworthy in the neighborhood as on the national scene. Second, scout executives as a rule are publicity-minded, and the national organization takes pains to nurture that point of view. Third, local councils consciously draw a substantial part of their volunteer leadership from among men who know advertising, publicity, and public relations and who can—and do—carry major responsibility for publicizing their scouting programs. Fourth, the abundance of literature, publicity matter, and other interpretative materials turned out by the national staff provides an invaluable backlog. Fifth, many local scout councils are members of community chests and councils of social agencies and share in all of the publicity gains growing out of such relationships.

The result is a great flow of Boy Scout publicity from virtually every community in the land. If there is not always a well-rounded "publicity program" in each council to provide balance and direction to the output, the total helps nevertheless to perform that important function—to tell the story of scouting.

CHAPTER VIII

PUBLIC RELATIONS AS A RESPONSIBILITY

COINED AND popularized only within recent years, the term *public relations* suggests various meanings to various persons. Agreement prevails fairly widely as to certain of its implications—notably that it involves processes employed by an agency or institution in effecting, nurturing, and increasing general understanding, cordiality, and goodwill.

However, considerable difference is found in the scope of the public relations pattern as it exists in different organizations. Often, for instance, efforts to build understanding, cordiality, and goodwill are expressly confined to specific activities rather than extended to all program and administrative operations. This may mean that pains are taken to make a good showing when the problem concerns money-raising or special events or the production of publications, while little attention is given to prosaic day-by-day procedures by which the agency also is judged. Not infrequently the whole business resolves into straight publicity. Again in innumerable cases nothing definite at all is done about public relations planning, under the belief that relationships with the people take care of themselves and require no positive action.

Scope of the Public Relations Assignment

Against a background of varying methods and points of view in this field, the public relations picture

presented in our study of the Boy Scouts of America offers certain measurements and guides that are useful. It should be emphasized that scouting's public relations processes are not held forth as criteria. Such evaluation, even implied, is outside the range of this treatment. But there are elements in this public relations story that offer perspective to the planner, the practitioner, and the observer alike.

First, we have seen how the public relations pattern of the movement actually extends the length and breadth of the scouting program. While it can scarcely be said that the Boy Scouts of America ever has weighed all of its actions and activities according to public relations values as such (the public relations concept as known today is rooted only in the early 1920's), the movement has succeeded in achieving a high measure of integration with its various publics. In its character-building plan; its color, symbols, and romance; its volunteer program, public services, and aggressive point of view, scouting possesses elements invaluable in producing understanding, cordiality, and goodwill. Something of the sort may be said, too, for the uniformity that prevails throughout the organization: every local council reflecting national forms, procedures, and policies to the extent that the Boy Scout is easily identified wherever he may be. Whether or not any other agency enjoys as many or more or fewer ingredients for popular acceptance is, of course, beside the point. What is demonstrated in the story of the Boy Scout movement is the scope of the public relations responsibility. Planned for or not, the public relationships tend to be as broad as the agency program.

Second, here is brought out the diversity of the proc-

esses that figure in public relations, processes which social agencies so often fail to recognize in this sense. While there is no observable evidence that the Boy Scouts of America itself has consciously identified many of them in such terms, most administrative and program features of scouting, as shown in this study, bear upon public understanding and goodwill. Thus, as we have seen, both recruitment and training of volunteers extend far beyond usual agency procedures to assume important places in the public relations pattern, for the volunteer not only is the object of special cultivation and interpretation but tends to become a seasoned interpreter in his own right. Methods used by the movement to increase membership participation meet the same test. So do community services, which are at once a feature of the scouting program and public demonstrations of what the Boy Scout movement stands for. Research is perceived to be much more than the study of cold facts and figures, since it too plays a significant role in the building of popular understanding and goodwill. Production of literature—including "tools"—bears much the same stamp. On the other hand, publicity, as such, emerges as but one aspect of the whole scheme. Compounded of so many parts, the public relations responsibility calls for a combination of planning, co-ordination, and production.

Third, the scout organization provides no over-all director or co-ordinator of public relations. However, it seeks to integrate goodwill-making activities by encouraging the exchange of information and ideas among national staff units and setting up administrative processes for this purpose. Of course, it is up to an agency to

determine for itself whether, and to what extent, centralized direction adds to, or detracts from, the production of the best possible results. Opinions vary on this subject. In two fields where public relations as a specialty has received much of its impetus—commerce and industry—staff specialists commonly are employed in ranking executive positions to tie together and superintend the whole assignment. Large business organizations rely increasingly upon the technician, trained in the methods of public relations, to carry responsibility for all aspects of their operations which influence popular understanding, cordiality, and goodwill. Some social agencies, if few in number, also follow this formula and centralize direction of the entire public relations program in one person or a single staff unit; one example being the Pennsylvania Department of Public Assistance, the subject of an earlier study in the series to which the present book belongs.[1] On the other hand, many other social agencies pursue the course taken by the Boy Scouts of America. The following discussions deal with methods employed by this organization to unify the public relations responsibility.

Distributing the Assignment

One characteristic that distinguishes the Boy Scout public relations pattern from many others is the widespread distribution of the public relations assignment.

The national staff of the Boy Scouts of America is grouped into four main *divisions:* (1) Operations, (2)

[1] Levy, Harold P., A Study in Public Relations. Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1943.

Program, (3) Personnel, and (4) Business, in addition to the general administration which includes both the office of the comptroller and the director of Research and Statistics. Each of these major units subdivides further into one or more functional *services*. And virtually every one carries some substantial share of the public relations responsibility in addition to—or as a part of—its administrative, operational, or program activities.[1]

As brought out in earlier pages of this study, the Program Division unit known as Public Relations Service is charged alone with producing and distributing publicity; that is, public information directed to the people at large.[2] Beyond that, however, a dozen or more staff departments have something to do with the processes already referred to as figuring in public relations, such as the output of periodicals, handbooks, printed pamphlets and leaflets; the cultivation by one means or another of good relations between the agency and special publics composed of volunteers, scouts and scouters, and various organizations and institutions; the development and uses of badges and symbols that play upon popular acceptance of the movement; public speaking, and others.

Co-ordinating the Assignment

While various divisions and services of the national staff perform those parts of the public relations job, and do so with considerable independence, a co-ordi-

[1] Differing from other subordinate units in organization alignment, though not in its participation in the public relations assignment, the Research and Statistical Service was made directly responsible to the chief scout executive when reorganized in 1941.

[2] Chapter VII, The Publicity Program.

nating system that covers all administrative operations has its effect here, too. This plan divides into at least three main parts, as follows:

1. Conferences and meetings on the several staff levels. Directors of all services, such as Public Relations, Editorial, and Relationships, meet regularly and frequently with their divisional directors to discuss work afoot and ahead. The four division directors, in turn, meet at regular intervals with the chief scout executive and deputy chief scout executive as a co-ordinating committee. Finally, the director of every division and service participates in an annual staff conference when the entire program of the Boy Scouts of America is developed for the approaching year.

2. Centralized supervision of all written and printed materials. As mentioned in Chapter VI, Literature Related to the Program, the Editorial Service within recent years has received fairly sweeping authority over published matter turned out by the scouting organization.[1]

This department is responsible for editing and approving every piece of copy produced by the national staff—newspaper stories and radio scripts no less than periodicals and pamphlets. Further, it has power to ascertain the value of every published item bearing the imprint of scout headquarters and to decide when a printed piece has outlived its usefulness and should be revised or discarded. Often, however, responsibilities of editing, as well as of writing and production, are farmed out to other divisions and services.

As a final step, the chief scout executive, or in his

[1] See pp. 112–113.

absence a delegated authority, must add his approval to production items—particularly the more important ones. This again applies to the output of the Public Relations Service as well as to other services and divisions.

3. Partial unification of three other functions bearing on the public relations program: field service, counsel to local scout organizations, and public speaking by national staff men. Similar to the over-all responsibilities exercised by the Editorial Service in its specialized field, the national Division of Operations co-ordinates services for the entire scouting organization in these areas.

Administratively, this division performs two roles that give purpose to the co-ordinating assignment: to promote the establishment and successful operation of local councils; and by careful supervision, to assure the Boy Scouts of America that all locals maintain a scouting program of sufficient vitality to assure the recruiting of every possible boy within each chartered territory. A regional staff shoulders a portion of this task; the remainder is borne by the division's home office personnel where direction is centralized.

In any case, the job comprises a good deal of "trouble-shooting" in the form of assistance to local councils needing guidance, much routine checking and counseling in offices throughout the country, and considerable participation in meetings, conferences, and institutes held regionally and locally. The whole thing entails a sizable field staff composed of specialists in the scouting program who are able to discuss problems of finance and publicity as well as cubbing, camping, senior scouting, and others that may arise.

The concentration of field workers in the Division of Operations does not prevent other units in the home office from giving advisory service when local councils request it. Virtually all of them do so. The Editorial Service, for example, reviews materials turned out locally if so invited, and the Public Relations Service consults on publicity problems when asked. But any occasion that involves travel to the field generally is cleared with "Operations."

At the beginning of each year, scouting headquarters queries scout organizations in the various localities to determine which national staff men are wanted during the approaching twelve months for consultation or to fill speaking engagements locally. Upon receipt of all such requests, they are co-ordinated and the Division of Operations lays out a travel schedule. Additional field trips are scheduled and made without such advance notice, of course, but every one is expected to be cleared routinely in much the same manner.

Until this point in our study, public speaking has received only passing notice, the reason being that scouting headquarters places very little stress on that medium as a *planned* part of its public relations program.[1] In its point of view on the subject, the scout organization differs from many social agencies which rely seriously upon this device to present their stories to the public.

This is not meant to imply an absence of public speaking from the Boy Scout public relations pattern, since national executives and staff representatives are in constant demand and a heavy schedule of public

[1] See p. 144.

speaking goes hand-in-hand with counseling and field services. For some time, however, the home office has sought to reduce such public appearances by its men in the field, hoping to free more of their time for consultation with local scouters. As it works out, national representatives continue to fill numerous engagements in their travels about the country, addressing civic clubs and various community groups and, almost invariably, special meetings sponsored by local councils.

Apart from field trips, many invitations are received directly by national staff men. Since the greater percentage are accepted, the home office usually arranges to incorporate field work in any trip involved. As in other cases, engagements of the sort pass through the Division of Operations for approval.

Some provision virtually always is made for publicity; each scheduled trip being reported routinely to the Public Relations Service which, in turn, sends prepared biographical material to scout councils concerned for use locally.

By these means the varied public relations services of the national staff are blocked into a comprehensive pattern.

Personnel for the Job

Just as in countless other organizations and agencies, the professional staff of the Boy Scouts of America comprises men of many backgrounds and vocational experiences. They are the executives who carry out the public relations responsibilities detailed in this book.

Having entered scouting from such varied fields as

teaching, social work, law, business, publicity, natural sciences, medicine, and physical training, the great majority share a common working experience in perhaps one essential only: as long-time scouters, either professionally or as volunteers, or both. An understanding of scouting, acquired often—though not always—through service in local councils, is the common denominator.

Moreover, years of association with the movement have served to make most of these men well-qualified spokesmen for the Boy Scouts of America and the things it stands for. Special training in scouting, particularly among the younger executives, has rounded out their qualifications in this respect, for the national By-Laws provide that only an individual trained, schooled, and tested in scouting is eligible to hold an executive position.

While stress has been laid upon proficiency in scouting, however, relatively little attention has been given, in the national staff as a whole, to specialized skills and experience in the techniques of publicity and public relations. A man responsible for part of the public relations assignment may well have come to his post without training or special aptitude in matters such as interpretive writing, the uses of informational media, the identification of *publics* and their variable requirements, ways to appraise public attitudes affecting the agency, and other techniques that figure in the problem of maintaining good relations between the organization and the people. Many executives perform their individual assignments in public relations because to do so has proved necessary or important, or they are proficient in seeing such jobs

through. Some have shown themselves particularly skillful. By and large, though, their efforts in this field have been the efforts of individuals exercising a good measure of initiative.

In the Public Relations Service the picture changes perceptibly. Here emphasis is placed upon training and experience in publicity, original writing, newspaper work, radio, and other media; most professional and technical members of the staff having engaged in one or more of these specialties before joining the scouting organization or having concentrated upon them since. Yet, even in the Public Relations Service which specializes in publicizing the scout movement, a premium is placed upon experience in scouting—sometimes on a par with, if not over, proven publicity skill itself.

The national director of Public Relations came to the Boy Scouts of America with a background of more than twenty-five years devoted to a combination of printing, newspaper work, commercial advertising, and publicity. Although having no prior experience as a professional scouter, he had served as a volunteer in the movement. On the other hand, the assistant director of Public Relations, who joined the staff in 1940 as consultant and adviser to the motion picture industry, came directly out of professional scouting where for many years he served as executive of a local council. Again, one of the assistants to the director, assigned major responsibility for news releases, "grew up," professionally speaking, in the scout organization where most of his training and experience has been acquired. After several years as a Boy Scout, he started as a clerk in what then was known as the

Publicity Department. An interest in journalism pre-dated his employment by the Boy Scouts of America and since has expressed itself in the publication of two small journals devoted to a field he follows as a hobby, polar exploration. Varied professional experiences also mark the careers of the three other executive members of the publicity staff employed as of 1943.

Conclusion

A point that stands out in this entire study of the Boy Scouts of America is the interrelation of three main areas of agency operation: administration, program, and public relations. Not only do all three count importantly in achieving scouting's objectives, but each plays upon and modifies the others.

Other organizations and agencies may well find that this point has wide and general application. Executives and staff workers almost invariably place high value upon good administration and sound program practices. The public relations aspect frequently escapes the same notice. Yet, when the plan and pattern of the agency are spread out to be seen as a whole, that third element—public relations—assumes an identity so often lost in the long shadows cast by the other two.

Problems of public relations exist inevitably in an organization serving the people, whether the Boy Scouts of America or another. They must be met with planning, performance, and manpower assigned to the job.

INDEX

Since *public relations* comprises the substance of this book and the *Boy Scouts of America* provides the setting, both have been largely omitted from the index as separate subjects. Listed, however, are references to the Public Relations Service as a unit of the scouting organization and various references to the Boy Scouts of America pertaining to high points in its history and procedures.