

Scouting Seen as Aid To Retain Heritage

(From BIA BULLETIN and NATIVE NEWS)

The 11th American Indian Tribal Leaders' Conference on Scouting was recently staged in Oregon. Its theme was "Indian Heritage Builds Scouting—Scouting Builds Indian Heritage."

Robert L. Bennett, Indian Affairs Commissioner and former Area Director for Alaska was the keynote speaker. He addressed the largest group of Tribal Scout leaders ever assembled. It was a great honor for one of Scouting's most dedicated Indian leaders.

Three Alaskans attended with 85 delegated from 28 Tribes. Thomas Tungwenuk, Minister and Scout Leader, Wales, Alaska, represented the Midnight Sun Council (Fairbanks). Emil Kowalczyk, Juneau Area Office and Frank Thrasher, Mt. Edgecumbe High School teacher, both active Scouters, represented the Bureau.

The central values of Scouting, in many ways, are similar to the values of our Aleut, Eskimo, and Indian people: reverence toward nature; respect for authority; concern for youth; and appreciation for the work of leaders who have gone before them.

BOYPOWER '76: Scouting is "tooling up" for a nationwide drive to increase Scout participation. The goal is to increase membership, upgrade program quality, and train more leaders. One-third of the Nation's boys will be involved by 1976. Among Indians, only four percent of the boys are now involved; the goal is ten percent by '76.

Alaska has bid to host the 13th Tribal Leaders' Conference on Scouting in 1970. Certainly our State and our Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut people can contribute significantly to the Nation's Scout program. We welcome the opportunity. We look forward to more Scout programs in our villages, towns, and cities. Scouting builds men; and men—good leaders, interested parents—build Scouting!

The keystone to growth of Scouting in all parts of Alaska is participation by men, boys, and parents—of all interests—in all walks of life.

Boy Scouts is a big program in Alaska. It can be bigger. Nearly half of the locations where the Bureau supports a school have active Scout programs.

Other Native communities do not have Scout troops. Scouting starts with boys. It gives them an advantage that other boys do not have. The boys in your village today are your community leaders of tomorrow.

Interested adult leaders are needed today to foster Scout programs for your sons. I urge all of you to help in providing this leadership.

CHARLES A. RICHMOND
Area Director