

May 20, 1968.

Mr. GEORGE B. HARTZOG,
Director, National Park Service, Department of the Interior,
Washington, D.C.:

Reference is made to my telegram of April 25, 1968, requesting permission for a group of Boy Scouts to camp near Washington Monument during the period July 18-20, 1968. Urgent that I have final decision as quickly as possible. Visit of Scouts contingent upon determination made by your office.

Sincerely,

BASIL L. WHITENER,
Member of Congress.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE,
Washington, D.C., May 21, 1968.

Hon. BASIL L. WHITENER,
House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR BASIL: We regret not having replied sooner to your recent telegram and letter in behalf of several Boy Scout troops concerning their plans for an encampment in sight of the Washington Monument during the period July 18-20. However, as you may know, I have made several attempts to contact you by telephone to discuss this subject, personally.

July is one of our heaviest visitor periods in Washington. The Washington Monument, the Capitol, and the other great monuments and public buildings in and along the Mall are, of course, prime attractions for these visitors. In these circumstances, I regret very much that I cannot accede to the request for a Boy Scout encampment in this area at that particular time.

We would, however, welcome the Boy Scout encampment at other park areas in the immediate vicinity of Washington, D.C. For example, a very fine site can be provided them at Prince William Forest Park, Triangle, Virginia. Moreover, we would be pleased to make a site available at Greenbelt Park, if they prefer. Enclosed for your convenience are pamphlets relating to the above-named areas.

Please let me know if I may be of further service in arranging suitable accommodations for these young people from your District.

Thank you very much for your continuing cooperation and assistance in the programs of the National Park Service.

With warmest personal regards and every good wish, I am

Sincerely yours,

GEORGE B. HARTZOG, Jr. Director.

Mr. Speaker, I am shocked that the National Park Service and the Department of the Interior would deny to the Boy Scouts of my congressional district the same privileges which are at this time being accorded to another group. I am particularly shocked that the Park Service would base the denial upon the fact that the area in which the Scouts would have been located is a "prime attraction" for the heavy numbers of visitors in Washington at the time covered by my request. The same argument is applicable to those who are now encamped upon the same area requested by me for the Boy Scouts.

It has also been brought to my attention by Members of Congress and by the public press that Baptist Church leaders have been denied a permit to stage a public march and rally on the park lands along the Mall and near the Washington Monument, for the period October 10-13, 1968. These outstanding churchmen have planned their rally in connection with their Continental Congress of the Crusade of Americas. According to these church leaders, 10,000 marchers representing an estimated 24 million Baptists in the United States, Canada, and Latin America were planning to hold their event as the highlight of their religious crusade to Washington.

Mr. Speaker, it is beyond my comprehension that a nation which has as one of its fundamental policies the equal treatment of all citizens would discriminate against a splendid youth organization such as the Boy Scouts of