

CHARGE TO THE EAGLE SCOUTS NOVEMBER 22, 1982

I am honored to be here for the night of this remarkable award for Tom Austin and John Riddle—our new Eagles. It is my privilege to now give the Eagle Scout Charge to them.

The high accomplishment you have earned—John and Tom—will always go with you. It is a mark which means much to the people of this country as a whole—we all respect Eagles. It means a great deal to the colleges across America as they decide who will be admitted from the thousands applying to get into our finest universities. And it means a great deal—I know—to those who decide whom they will employ in good positions in the years to come in business or government, or any important task.

This is all because you have shown *loyalty* to Scouting and *perseverance*. Only some 2%, I understand, of all Scouts ever achieve the rank of Eagle. You have come through 5 lower ranks and now are at the top.

At the last Eagle Court of Honor when I talked I told one story I will repeat tonight. That day I had just flown to Dallas for the funeral of a great Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States—Justice Tom Clark. There in his eulogy this story was told. Justice Clark had once awarded the Eagle Scout Award to a young man at a Court of Honor—he always had great interest in Scouting. He told that Eagle Scout that he hoped he might grow up to be a fine lawyer. And the boy did. And then years later that Eagle Scout became the Law Clerk to the Justice—and then these two Scouts worked side by side at the Supreme Court!

You will remember tonight some of those hardest merit badges you have earned—citizenship in the *community*, in the *nation* and in the *world*. Well, you now have a new and higher honor but it marks you for responsibility in each of those same three areas—as an Eagle in your *community*, in your *nation*, and in the *world*. All will be looking to you and watching for your service as an Eagle.

As we close, let me ask you this one solemn time, John and Tom, to repeat here for us your Scout Oath together:

On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country
and to obey the Scout Law;

To help other people at all times;
To keep physically strong,
mentally awake and morally straight.

That says it all. You have learned the real secrets and accomplished the true goals of Scouting—and all of us warmly congratulate you!