



SCOUTING/USA

CROSSROADS OF AMERICA COUNCIL  
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA, INC.

COUNCIL 160 — EAST CENTRAL REGION

June 28, 1982

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

RE: RANDY MERRITT, SKIPPER  
EXPLORER SHIP 12

On Thursday, June 24, 1982, Mrs. [REDACTED] telephoned to make an appointment for her and her husband to meet with the Scout Executive at 2 P.M. on Friday, June 25. She indicated that it was a serious and urgent matter and on a subsequent call stressed that the visit should be a confidential one. She indicated that it dealt with Exploring and Explorer Ship 12 in particular.

At 2 P.M. on Friday, June 25, 1982 - [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] arrived for the appointment. The [REDACTED] indicated that they were the parents of [REDACTED], age 15. Mrs. [REDACTED] was the mother of [REDACTED], age 14. Both boys were members of Explorer Ship 12, chartered to St. Maur's Seminary on the Indianapolis northwest side.

In turn, each of the three parents recounted events of a portion of an overnight Ship 12 camping event on the weekend of June 19-20 near Logansport in Cass County. The event was related to "boot training" and specifically scuba diving testing. All three indicated that Skipper Randy Merritt slept in a tent with the boys and during the night allegedly and in sequence put his hand first in the sleeping bag of [REDACTED] and then that of [REDACTED] in the area of their genitals. He was repulsed by both in sequence and then resorted to stroking their faces, hair and legs. All allegedly happened separately - first with [REDACTED] and then with [REDACTED] on two occasions during the night.

On return home on Sunday, June 20, each boy reported to their respective parents what had happened. Mrs. [REDACTED] contacted Mrs. [REDACTED] and discussed possible action. Mrs. [REDACTED] discussed the matter with the Marion County Prosecutor's office without revealing the name of the adult or the organization.

In the course of the meeting, it became apparent that they had a great appreciation for Merritt's fine and dedicated work with Scouting and would prosecute only if it were the only way he could get needed treatment. They were strongly of the opinion he should be separated from the unit and Scouting and required to get treatment. Both boys were very happy with Exploring after a short tenure and had nothing but the best of feelings for the program and the Skipper. The boys' attitudes were described by their parents as primarily ones of "shock and disappointment."

ROESCH-RANSBURG SCOUT SERVICE CENTER . . .  
615 N. Alabama Street — Indianapolis, Indiana 46204 — (317) 634-7391

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THANKS TO YOU  
UNITED WAY WORKS  
FOR ALL OF US



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I brought Mr. Robert W. Seymour, Director of Exploring, into the visit part way through with the approval of the three parents. We suggested that he and I meet with Merritt and confront him on the allegations and secure an admission, at which point we would take steps to place him on the B.S.A. "Confidential File," and try to arrange for treatment. They were generally in agreement but asked to defer until [REDACTED] (who was out of town until Friday evening) returned and had a chance to concur. [REDACTED] called me on Friday evening and concurred in our procedure. Mr. Merritt was out of state over the weekend attending a Sea Badge course in Illinois.

Randy Merritt had been on the B.S.A. "Confidential File" list in an earlier period for the same charges. At that time (1972-73) he took treatment and on the advice of the psychiatrist treating him and his minister, he was allegedly "cured." On the basis of their statements at that time and the recommendation of the Scout Executive he was removed from the file and allowed to register for each of the next two years "on probation" with an annual recommendation by the Scout Executive. His service in the intervening period and his conduct appeared to be exemplary. This history was not shared with the parents during the visit and discussion in the belief that it was confidential and would be prejudicial to the case.

June 29, 1982

We chose to meet with and confront Randy Merritt in the office of the Scout Executive on Monday, June 28, and Exploring Director Bob Seymour and I met with him at approximately 10:45 A.M. for about an hour and a half. Merritt appeared very shaken by the charges and the confrontation. He would not admit guilt and denied that what was alleged to have taken place did, to the best of his knowledge, actually take place. He readily agreed to step down as Ship Advisor and admitted only that he has a tendency to put his arm around "his boys" and praise them for doing good things and recognizes that this can be misunderstood. It was pointed out that the allegations did not deal with this kind of "hands on" experience but related to a tent situation after retiring for the night. He was asked to be brutally honest and tell us the truth. He anguished over it considerably but never did admit guilt. He expressed an interest to meet with the parents and attempt to give his point of view. I promised to contact the parents and pass along his request. It was made abundantly clear that the potential for prosecution was very great. He indicated that he felt he was a loser either way and that his options were not great. He indicated that if he signed a "confession" it would mean the end of his Scouting career which meant so very much to him. He felt that if he did not admit guilt, he would certainly face prosecution and couldn't possibly win under the circumstances, nor could he afford it. He expressed concern about losing his wife, his job and his home.

I agreed to contact the parents, which I did, and they wanted some time to think about such a meeting and will respond on Tuesday, June 29, as well as indicate what they feel the next steps are.

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On the morning of June 29, I received a call from Mr. [REDACTED], father of [REDACTED] who indicated that he had no desire to have such a meeting but would leave it up to the others to respond to me. He indicated that he spent more time with his son to try to pry out of him what did, indeed, take place beyond what was previously reported. He indicated that his son said that not only was there physical attempts made, but there was considerable verbal approach for almost an hour's duration. He admitted that it seemed like an hour but probably wasn't that long, but that it did take place for some time and because Merritt had indicated that he was very tired, had gone right to sleep, this would appear to be evidence that that was not the case.

June 30, 1982

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL  
RANDY MERRITT, SKIPPER  
SHIP 12

Mrs. [REDACTED] called on behalf of the parents involved to indicate that they had met and decided that they did not want to meet with Mr. Merritt. They were of the opinion that it would simply be a rehash of what had already been expressed on his behalf and serve no useful purpose, unless he had something new to say. She indicated that she had had contact with the Marion County Prosecutor's office and they are leaning toward prosecution. On advice of that office, she was advised that each of the two young men (their sons) should prepare statements in writing, spelling out exactly what they say took place on the occasion of the overnight campout. She also indicated that she had a feeling from the Prosecutor's office that if Merritt were to agree to take some tests that would be administered and if they indicated a need for treatment and he agreed to take that treatment, they would be satisfied and withdraw any further action through the courts which could result in incarceration. She thanked the Scout executive for the manner in which we have responded and acted in this case and left him with the impression that the next move would be up to them and that they will meet again (the two sets of parents) and determine finally whether they will move for prosecution or not.

Their position seems to have hardened over the last few days and yet they stressed that they feel the only sure way to get help for Merritt is to go the prosecution route. They continue to have his best interests at heart and the protection of other innocent young people.

As promised, the Scout executive talked with Randy Merritt as did Bob Seymour, to advise him that the parents declined to meet with him. He was greatly disappointed and indicated that he felt he should have the opportunity. He asked what their probable course of action next would be and we responded that we had no knowledge of that but only that they declined to meet with them. The Scout executive stressed to Merritt that if there was anything new that he wanted to say or if he cared to change his position regarding his guilt in the allegations, he should think it through very carefully and advise one of us rapidly. He indicated he would do this but again said that he was very reluctant to admit guilt for something that he felt he was not guilty of.

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July 2, 1982

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A call was received from the [REDACTED] on July 1, indicating that they had changed their minds and would have a meeting with Randy Merritt at the Scout Office, on Friday, July 2, at 11 A.M., and asked that the Scout Executive plan to sit in.

The meeting was held on July 2 with Mr. and Mrs. [REDACTED], Mr. [REDACTED] and Randy Merritt. It was stated that the meeting was being held not to rehash anything previously stated, so much as to follow up on the indication from Merritt that he had something new to say. The meeting was very positive and resulted in Merritt changing his plea to one of admitting that the facts as reported by the two boys was indeed true. He was asked to sign a resignation from Ship 12 and from the Boy Scouts of America, which he did. This is being transmitted to the National Council with the request that he be placed again on the Confidential File of the Boy Scouts of America.

The fear of prosecution prompted his reversal, and Mr. [REDACTED] pressed him very hard to indicate that he was indeed guilty and in no circumstances should just indicate guilt in order to avoid prosecution. Merritt responded that he was guilty and everything was exactly as the boys had indicated. He promised that he would take treatment and the [REDACTED] and Mr. [REDACTED] indicated that they wanted this to happen and to be monitored and they would like to have periodic reports to ensure that this was happening. Under the circumstances, and contingent upon his taking treatment and periodic reports being shared, they agreed not to proceed with prosecution.

RECORDED BY:



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ROBERT L. CALVERT  
COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

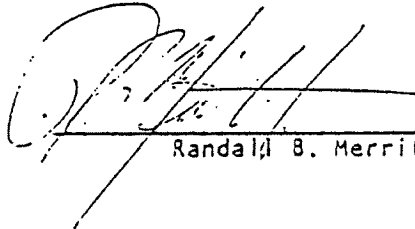
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July 2, 1982

I, Randall B. Merritt, admit to taking liberties with [REDACTED] (age 14) and [REDACTED] (age 15) on Saturday night, June 19, 1982. These liberties had a sexual overtone. Recognizing the gravity of this offense and fully recognizing the consequences of this action, I hereby formally resign my position as Skipper of Ship 12 and from the Boy Scouts of America.

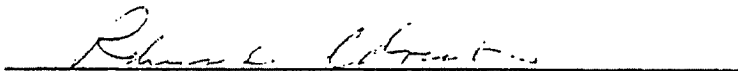


\_\_\_\_\_  
Randall B. Merritt

WITNESSES TO SIGNATURE:

 ED #160

\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert W. Seymour  
Director of Exploring



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Robert L. Calvert  
Council Executive

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