
Why Boys Should Not Join the “Boy Scouts”

by Celia Rosatstein

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Throughout the schools of the United States, boys are asked to join the Army. Of course, the capitalists do not call it the Army. They claim that these boys are not being gathered to be trained for future soldiers but rather to be taught to become *gentlemen*. The boys are formed into regiments — each regiment having a number and called, for instance, “Regiment 4” of “The Boy Scouts.”

Boys, the capitalists are enticing you by promising beautiful things: such as guns, uniforms, camp life, etc. Many of you have already joined. During the Civil War were not the people of the North and those of the South human beings — all brothers and sisters? Still they killed each other, and why? Because someone told them to. They were so used to obeying commands that they did not stop to think what they were doing, fathers thus being murderers of sons and sons murderers of fathers. Brother killed brother; cousin killed cousin. And still you want to learn to do the same thing. Could they not have settled peaceably and prevented the spilling of blood? Francisco Ferrer, a man loved and admired by the whole world, was shot down like a dog because he tried to teach the people. The soldiers had nothing against him. At the bottom of their hearts they knew he committed no crime. And yet because they had to obey the commands of the Spanish officers, they were compelled to shoot so noble a man like Francisco Ferrer.

Do not join the scouts. You will be taught to stand up for your master, to respect your master, to obey your master, and in case of a strike to shoot to kill. They will teach you that the workers are fools; that they don't know what they are talking about when they want their rights. And when your parents who had struggled hard to support you that you may grow up to be good and healthy men, rise up and still struggle that you and your brothers and sisters may live in plenty, you, being on the side of the capitalists, will crush them. And yet you want to join an army where you will be taught to do the same. And then you say, "In case of war, will my country need me?" You are justified in saying this because you have always been taught that war is good.

But in the world that the Socialists are striving to build there will be no war. Peace will reign throughout the world. Instead of factories where guns, powder, and other implements of war are made, large buildings will be built for those who have no homes, and instead of the money being spent for large battle-ships, it will be spent for bettering the conditions of the working class. In the places where the soldiers are drilled large schools and colleges will be put up and instead of being taught to be ready for war we will be taught to become good men and women and to live in peace and brotherhood.

Especially you boys of the Socialist Sunday Schools, do not join the "Boy Scouts." Persuade your friends not to do so but instead to join the Socialist Schools where they will be taught to stand for Liberty, Peace, and Brotherhood.

Edited by Tim Davenport

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