



Americanism Commission  
Chairman Joe Caouette.  
*James V. Carroll*





Boy Scouts of America

The Boy Scouts of America thought it won a major victory in the U.S. Supreme Court on June 28, 2000.

The Court upheld the Scouts' right to prevent openly homosexual men from serving as Scoutmasters, thus protecting the organization's ability to set its own membership criteria. Yet the organization has been under fire ever since.

"The opponents of Scouting have demonstrated that they are unwilling to tolerate the views and values of others," former Attorney General Edwin Meese wrote in the July 2001 issue of *The American Legion Magazine*. "They often advocate diversity but tolerate only the lock-step cadence of political correctness."

Those opponents have succeeded in banning the Boy Scouts from some public meeting places across the country and have

pressured many charitable campaigns to drop the nonprofit Boy Scouts as a participating organization.

Despite the Boy Scouts' Supreme Court victory, the judicial battles have not ended. The organization, with the support of The American Legion, is asking the Supreme Court to overturn a lower court's decision that allows the state of Connecticut to exclude the Boy Scouts as a participant in its state-employee charitable-contribution campaign.

Joseph E. Caouette, chairman of The American Legion Americanism Commission, believes attacks against the Boy Scouts are battles in a larger war – a war against American values. The Korean War veteran and retired postmaster reiterated his call for higher morality in a recent interview with *The American Legion Magazine*.

# Values and the Boy Scouts

*Americanism chairman laments attacks on morality.*

*“The American Legion, like the Scouts, is a private organization, and someday a group with a different agenda could target us.”*

**The American Legion Magazine:** Two years ago you said, “As long as the Scouts’ aims and purposes remain intact, The American Legion will continue supporting them.” Do you feel the Boy Scouts of America has maintained its aims and purposes?

**Joseph E. Caouette:** Certainly the national organization has. Most local Scout troops have as well. In my town of Rollinsford, N.H., we have the Daniel Webster Troop 187. They set the foundations for America. They are a force for good, morality, a belief in God or a supreme being. But because of this, opponents call them a “discriminatory” organization. That just scares me because it could happen to all of us. It could happen to The American Legion. The American Legion, like the Scouts, is a private organization, and someday a group with a different agenda could target us.

**TALM:** How widespread is discrimination against the Boy Scouts?

**JC:** Very. It’s happening in Connecticut, Florida, California and many other states. Sometimes we lean over too far to

please minority groups. I know from experience. When I went to high school, I could barely speak English. I was educated by French Canadian nuns for my first eight years. My father said I had better learn to speak English if I’m going to get ahead in life. I have a French name that people can barely say, much less spell. But we are allowing minority views to supersede the majority, and that just scares me. That’s against all tenets of democracy. There are times when court rulings go against my view, but in the democratic process you have to eventually yield to the majority. There are those that are trying to impose their sexual lifestyles on the majority. Well, excuse me, but the Boy Scouts don’t want gays. They went all the way to the Supreme Court. The gays lost this battle, and I can’t understand why they are still getting the support of the media, responsible organizations like the United Way and some banks. Now the Boy Scouts have to go back to the Supreme Court to say, “We are being discriminated against for doing what you said we have a right to do.”

**TALM:** What does the controversy say about values in America?

**JC:** You read over history and it seems as if the great powers of the world have self-destructed. Do you remember (Soviet leader Nikita) Khrushchev banging his shoe and predicting that we would destroy ourselves from within? I think we’re doing it.

I was watching the playoffs between the Red Sox and A’s on television when a commercial promoting an upcoming show came on. The language that was used would have been unacceptable when I lived in a Marine barracks. I wasn’t born yesterday. I’ve been exposed to the dirt of the world. Yet we’re exposed to that kind of trash on our air-waves. Certainly every child in New England was watching that ball game. Yet we are all exposed to that language. I think it’s an attempt to destroy the moral fiber of this country.

The Boy Scouts of America was granted a victory, actually, when it was told that it could determine who is fit to be its leaders. It said that homosexuals couldn’t be troop leaders. And because they won the victory, they are under attack. It’s an attack on morality.

**TALM:** Are there other attacks?

**JC:** Sure. Look at the 9th Circuit Court’s ban on the Pledge of Allegiance. It concerns me that God is being removed from everyday life. Our founding fathers are spinning in their graves. Look at the Declaration of Independence: “all men are endowed by their Creator.” Toward the end of the Declaration, it affirms reliance on divine providence. You don’t have to call this providence “God.” You can call it “Allah.” But the First Amendment protects us from a state church, like what they had in England. 🇺🇸



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