

PROTECTION



EISENHOWER LEADERSHIP PATCH
Boy Scouts – Citizenship



Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1909

PROTECTION: Citizens must be ever ready to preserve, **PROTECT**, and defend the Constitution of the United States for all time.

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER: “Politics ought to be the part-time profession of every citizen who would **PROTECT** the rights and privileges of free people and who would preserve what is good and fruitful in our national heritage.”

CITIZENSHIP IS ABOUT PROTECTION: When Dwight D. Eisenhower took the oath of office, as President of the United States, on January 21, 1953, he raised his right hand and placed his left on the Bible, affirming: “I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, **PROTECT** and defend the Constitution of the United States.”

Nearly 42 years earlier a twenty-year-old Eisenhower had repeated a very similar oath when sworn in as a cadet of the United States Military Academy. It had been a chaotic day that he would never forget. He arrived at West Point the morning of June 14, 1911; the entire day had been marked by an impossible cacophony of rapid-fire orders— each punctuated with “on the double.” All the “green” cadets could do was try to obey as best they could. As the exhausting and difficult day drew to a close, assembled with 284 fellow cadets, Eisenhower raised his right hand. His voice joined in unison with his classmates: “I, Dwight D. Eisenhower do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic”

In his autobiography, *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends*, Eisenhower describes his profound feelings at that moment, more than a half a century later:

“A feeling came over me that the expression ‘The United States of America’ would now and henceforth mean something different than it ever had before. From here on it would be the nation I would be serving, not myself. Suddenly the flag itself meant something. I haven’t heard other officers speak of their memories of that moment but mine have never left me.”

VISIT THE EISENHOWER MUSEUM: In one of the first galleries of the museum, you are invited to explore Eisenhower’s years at West Point through the artifacts, photographs, artwork, documents, and exhibit labels included there. It was here that Eisenhower experienced an epiphany—every American citizen has a responsibility to **PROTECT** the Constitution of the United States. You may be interested to know that his graduating class—the class of 1915—would later be called “The Class the Stars Fell On” because it would include so many generals of World War II. Continue through the museum to the Presidential Gallery, where, across from the 1950s living room, you will see the large display case—and surrounding area—that features President Eisenhower’s first Inauguration Day, January 20, 1953. One of the artifacts is the Bible upon which he took the oath of office. It was a gift from his parents on his graduation from West Point in 1915. You may wish to view a video clip of Eisenhower taking the presidential oath of office at www.eisenhower.archives.gov/All_About_Ike/Speeches/Speeches.html.

PROTECTION AND CITIZENSHIP: What are the three most important lessons you have learned about citizenship and **PROTECTION** of the United States Constitution from your study of Dwight D. Eisenhower?

SHARE WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED: With whom will you share what you have learned about the obligation that citizens have to **PROTECT** our Constitution? List them below.

- 1.
- 2.

YOUR EISENHOWER LEADERSHIP PATCH AND ROCKERS: When you have completed this handout, you have earned the **EISENHOWER LEADERSHIP PATCH** and the **PROTECTION** rocker. If you have already earned the patch, completion of this activity signifies that you have earned the rocker. These items are available at the Visitors Center and Presidential Gift Shop. There are six rockers for the Cub Scout level. Boy Scouts may earn up to two rockers per museum visit.