

World Journal

EDITORIAL

VISITING SCOUTS

The 36 Boy Scouts from New York and New Jersey who arrived here Saturday on the exchange project known as "Amigos" will remain in Puerto Rico for two weeks. During their stay here the Scouts, selected by competitive examinations for the trip, will camp out for a week, then they will be guests in homes in San Juan, Ponce, Mayagüez, Arecibo, and St. Thomas.

We can think of no better way to get acquainted with a people than to share the comforts of their homes, to eat their food, enjoy recreational activities with them, and indulge in some questioning and answering on both sides. Once these youngsters have felt the hospitality of Puerto Rican homes, it will be difficult for anyone on the mainland to convince them that the people of Puerto Rico are any different from other honest, hard-working people they know in their own familiar environments.

Project "Amigos" is a two-way street. When these mainland Scouts return to their homes, they will be accompanied by 19 Puerto Rican Scouts who will camp out the first two weeks, and will spend a third week in the homes of continental families. This type of exchange, by its intimate nature, cannot fail to inspire understanding and to create lasting friendships. It is unfortunate that project "Amigos" cannot be carried out on a much larger scale—say two or three hundred boys in the course of a summer. Half the number could visit Puerto Rico, and an equal group could go north for two or three weeks. If the benefits of this exchange have justified the program—and there is sufficient evidence to indicate that they have—it would seem the practical thing to try to broaden the project.

We would go beyond extending the Boy Scout's "Amigos" project, however. We should like to see it carried on, in a similar manner, among adults. We can think of no more effective method of dispelling the mental cobwebs about other people than to visit them in their homes, and to have them visit with us for a spell.