



PHOTO BY DON KNIGHT

Half-dome in Yosemite National Park—near the site where 1,000 Royal Rangers from California and Nevada enjoyed a camporee last year.

IT WAS AN HISTORIC occasion when the Northern California-Nevada and Southern California Districts held a giant Royal Rangers Camporee together.

For the first time in its history, Yosemite National Park made available to a religious group (Royal Rangers) its choicest campground. The site was on the valley floor beside Merced River near Yosemite Lodge. The location is considered by many to be one of the most scenic spots in America.

After many months of preparation, the opening day arrived. Buses, cars, trailers, and trucks filled with Royal Rangers began pouring into the park. An elite group of older Royal Rangers called "The Royal Patrol," dressed in white helmets and wearing colorful arm bands, directed the groups to their campsites.

The young Rangers pitched their tents beneath giant trees in view of spectacular cascading falls. The towering, jagged cliffs echoed the shouts of excited boys setting up camp. Over 1,000 men and boys soon filled the camporee site.

The first order of business was supper, and soon flickering fires and spiraling columns of smoke dotted the tent city.

After the evening meal the boys made their way to the Council Fire area. Bubbling, contagious excitement marked the first rally. Their loud, lively singing could be heard far beyond the camp area.

National Training Coordinator Paul Feller, from Springfield, Mo., brought a challenging devo-

tion. Afterward the boys remained to view the spectacular attraction, "The Fire Fall." Everyone watched a high cliff. From the darkness a voice cried, "Let the fire fall." Suddenly live coals cascaded over the cliff, and a spectacular flaming cataract illuminated the valley.

After the boys were bedded down for the night and weary commanders began to drift off to sleep, a piercing cry was heard: "Bear! Bear!"

Curious park bears had smelled the food boxes and had come to explore! They succeeded in breaking into some of the boxes before the alarm was given. In the morning, some groups found they had less food, but also a tall tale to carry home.

The Royal Patrol was called out, and these boys went on shifts to keep the bears frightened away.

The next morning the group gathered at the Campfire Arena to hear a welcome speech from Park Ranger Smith, chief ranger of Yosemite National Park. He highly praised the boys for their conduct and attitude.

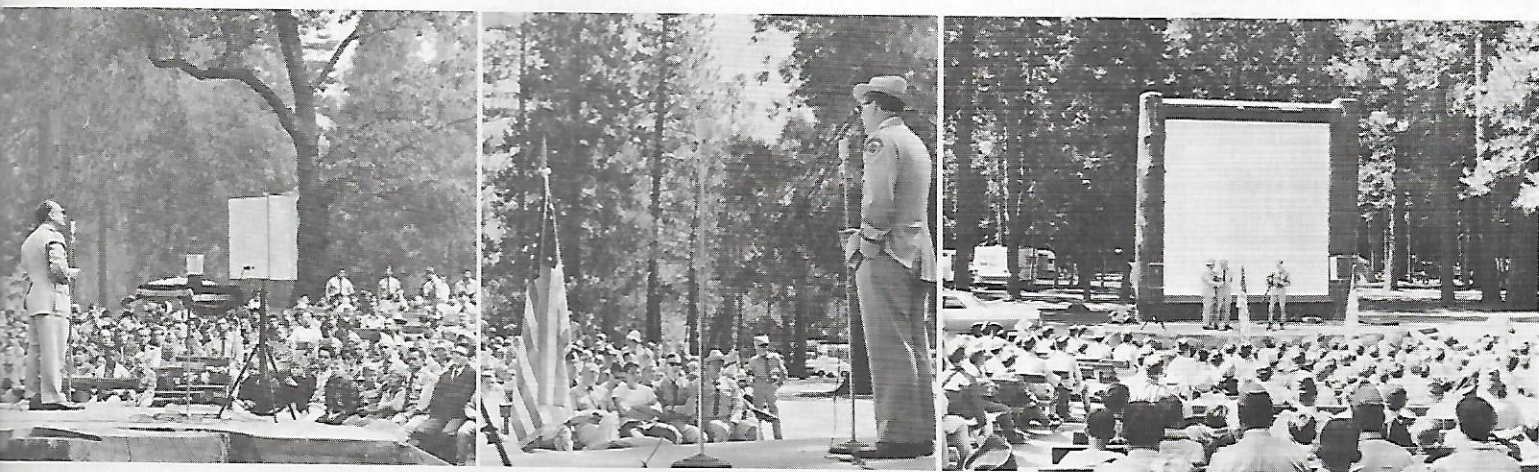
Following this the boys heard an informative lecture about the park from a leading naturalist. The rally concluded with an inspiring devotion from District Chaplain Joe Gerhart of the Northern California-Nevada District.

The remainder of the day the boys spent hiking, exploring, horseback riding, and enjoying the wonders of Yosemite.

On the second night the boys

(Continued on next page)

1,000 ROYAL RANGERS HAVE CAMPOREE



LEFT PHOTO: Northern California-Nevada District Superintendent Joe Gerhart, chaplain for the Royal Rangers of his district, addresses a group of Royal Rangers during the camporee at Yosemite National Park. **CENTER PHOTO:** Another guest speaker was National

Commander Johnnie Barnes. Almost 100 boys responded to Brother Barnes' invitation to accept Christ as their Saviour. **RIGHT PHOTO:** Royal Rangers gather at the Arena for a morning devotional service. The camporee was held during the Labor Day weekend.