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February 8, 1941

Supt. Clifford Dean
Lawrence Memorial High School
Lawrence, Kansas

Dear Superintendent Dean:

Ordinarily I would apologize for consistently pestering you about matters that you perhaps feel are irritating to you at times. But I do not apologize in regard to this very important intrusion upon your time. It concerns the youth of Lawrence and concerns them vitally.

Today of all times the national administration and all state administrations are calling upon youth and insisting that they be physically fit as well as emotionally and mentally so. With every selective draft examination more boys in greater numbers are showing their physical unfitness. And with each day our leaders arise and say, "For you, Uncle Sam, we will cooperate in every way possible. We want to help 100% in this great National Defense Program that is so necessary."

But do we do it? The gymnasias in this town are closed to youth. I do not know whether your own high school and grade school children break into your buildings, but if they would, I imagine they would be arrested. Yesterday children from your schools broke into both the gymnasium and auditorium with basketballs in their hands.

Officer George Snyder and Dr. E. R. Elbel are in my office now reporting this thing. They did not arrest the children because they did not feel that the blame was upon them.

Will you not, Clifford, make some arrangement whereby the children of Lawrence can play under supervision during Saturdays, Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, and especially after school hours? There is no provision made for the children of Lawrence to exercise under supervision after school hours.