

What has happened to community recreation since the war began?

It is now in its period of greatest expansion which cannot be compared to any other period. Reasons: shortly before the war the American people through the press, radio, government bureaus, etc., became increasingly aware of their neighbors - the people next door, and were called upon to cooperate with each other in various activities. Prior to this he hardly gave his neighbor a nod in the morning.

Government asked us to cooperate on many, many things. People have learned to work together and have learned to do things together that they never had done before. This is one of the greatest things that has come out of the war period.

Government also asked local communities to solve their own problems with changing population. Troops sent to different localities by the thousands - colored and white. Recreation at the base or camp was taken care of by military authorities. The job for the communities was when the soldier came to town.

Some communities set up defense or war recreation committees, realizing that the soldier came to town to do something. These committees began to act as a liaison between camp and town. the USO was designed to go into communities where the community itself could not handle the military load. Some of the greatest service men's centers today have been set up by these war recreation committees - stage door canteen, Chicago Service Men's Club, the Pier at Miami Beach - all run by local communities with local leadership.

As people became interested in recreation for soldiers they began to realize also that recreation was necessary for their own community. This is the second greatest thing that has come about in this war period. These people are now devoting their energies to local recreation. In Wichita, Kansas, a war recreation committee served the military as well as the war plant workers. \$18,000 from the community chest was expended there for the teen-age program. In Omaha, Nebr., the same type of development took place.

War recreation committees became the forerunner in handling the third great thing in this war period - the juveniles or teen-agers. People have suddenly become conscious that in their community are boys and girls who in a very distinct way are often apt to break over because they have an excess of energy - normal to adolescence - and people have become worried. Juvenile delinquency will never be eradicated by any one program because it is caused by too many things. Recreation won't do much for these boys and girls. Too much reliance has been placed upon the juke boxes in the community center. This cannot take the place of home, church and school.