

THE WORKS PROGRAM

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--Works Progress Administration--

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WPA and NYA Workers Make 1,500,000 Toys For Needy Children

Approximately 1,500,000 toys and other gifts for children of relief families having no funds for Christmas shopping have been made by project workers of the Works Progress Administration and the National Youth Administration, Aubrey Williams, Acting Administrator of WPA, announced today.

In an effort to supplement the gifts of other agencies so that every child may receive at least one toy and other evidence of remembrance at Christmas, Mr. Williams said, these workers are producing dolls for crippled and bedridden children in hospitals, thousands of warm garments, Christmas cards "reconditioned" for those who have never received one before, Braille cards for the blind and toys of almost every description.

Practically all divisions of the WPA are contributing to the Christmas gladness of underprivileged children. WPA sewing rooms and carpenter shops are producing hundreds of thousands of toys and warm garments, according to Mrs. Ellen S. Woodward, Assistant Administrator in charge of women's and professional projects. Jackets, caps, gloves, rompers for little folk, dresses for little girls and pants for little boys are being made in some 5,000 sewing rooms throughout the country. Scraps are used to make durable toys.

National Youth Administration workers have repaired discarded toys in thousands of communities in cooperation with local welfare agencies. In

some States young men on NYA rolls built toys during the entire past year to pay for their education and young women dressed dolls. The Education Division and Federal Art, Music and Drama units of WPA are likewise engaged in giving pleasure to underprivileged children of relief families through various Christmas activities.

Isolated children in the mountainous regions of Kentucky, some of whom have never seen a Christmas card, will receive reconditioned cards transported in packs by WPA women workers on horseback. There are seventy-three WPA book carriers in the United States and all but six are women. The custom of restoring used Christmas cards and taking them to such underprivileged children is growing from its small beginning in Kentucky, and may soon be practiced by all book carriers travelling into remote areas.

Counterpane toys are being made in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and in other cities for distribution to crippled and other bedridden children in hospitals. These are small, soft dolls and toy animals that are light and easily handled in bed. In Milwaukee and vicinity the names of 12,000 children of relief families have been listed by the manager of county institutions and the county relief superintendent. WPA is cooperating in supplying toys and clothing to them. Such cooperation of local agencies and the WPA is contained in reports from the various State directors, who list Christmas preparation activities county by county and in each county stress the cooperation of sponsoring agencies.

WPA toy repair shops in 17 States employ workers, skillful with the paint brush, saw and hammer, who repair toys which have been donated and make new toys from scraps of old ones.

Last week Philadelphia made a special occasion of the reconditioning of the half millionth toy by WPA and NYA workers for distribution by the Play-ground and Recreation Association.

Ten disabled war veterans on a WPA toy repair project in Brockton, Mass., have renovated 7,000 toys which will be distributed free to needy children at an American Legion Christmas eve party.

Another instance of the nation-wide cooperation between WPA and other agencies is the Toy Exchange in New Orleans, where the city provided the building to house toys. Social service workers gave mothers in relief families exchange slips to use as shopping currency in the Exchange to purchase toys for which their children have expressed a desire.

In Los Angeles, California, the County Toy Loan has forty branch lending centers. In Connecticut the two toy lending institutions sponsored by the Connecticut Public Welfare Council are called Toyeries. In Denver, Colorado, the NYA operates a similar project.

Children's furniture donated by stores in Tupelo, Mississippi, is being reconditioned by WPA workers and the leftover pieces used to make small toys. A Christmas tree will be trimmed and the stockings filled for children who are fed on the hot school lunch projects in Cohoma County, Mississippi.

It is estimated that between 150,000 and 200,000 toys will be made and repaired by WPA workers in Florida. Tampa workers are making clay models of doll heads from which paper-mache heads are constructed using bits of paper towels and newspaper scraps.

In Toledo, Ohio, some 15,000 toys will be ready for distribution on Christmas eve.

Reports continue to be received by the WPA Washington office of the nation-wide Christmas preparations being made for needy children, many observing that workers have devoted spare time and part of their lunch hours to such work.