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WPA ESTABLISHES NATION-WIDE PROGRAM FOR DEFENSE RECREATION CENTERS

A program to provide trained WPA leaders for the operation of recreation centers in military and industrial defense areas was announced today by Howard O. Hunter, Commissioner of Work Projects.

The plan is embodied in a \$5,000,000 nation-wide WPA project approved by the President and sponsored by the Federal Security Agency, which has been charged with the coordination of recreational activities under the defense program. The project has been certified by the Secretary of War as important to national defense and will operate in close conjunction with public and private local agencies and military authorities.

A quota of 5,000 of the 25,000 workers on the WPA Recreation Program has been made available through this project for employment where the Federal Security Agency requests their services in leisure-time activities. Nearly 350 areas have been designated by the FSA for defense recreation activities.

Many of the workers will assist community agencies in operating recreation centers in towns near military reservations and in unsettled, expanding industrial communities. Others will be employed on military reservations under direction of military authorities. Their number will include directors and leaders for sports, entertainments, social events, crafts and informal recreation activities and personnel to conduct information and hospital-ity services for soldiers.

"The WPA has been providing recreational opportunities for six years, working closely with local and State government agencies and community organizations," Mr. Hunter said. "During the last year we have been complementing and supplementing the local recreation forces in defense areas and performing requested services on military sites.

"Now our cooperative program has been extended to the national level so that trained leaders will be available in greater numbers where they are especially needed. Military authorities have frequently endorsed these services, feeling that adequate and supervised leisure-time activities are an important factor in morale."

The extent of WPA participation is expected to vary among the centers from virtually complete operation in some to the assistance of a few WPA recreation workers in others, depending on the needs and facilities of the community.