

## THE IMPORTANCE OF RECREATION

Since that unforgettable day of December 7th, a great deal has happened to us. This Assembly Center is the climax to a sudden series of startling events. We have been here for three months, but in that period of time have found life much more enjoyable than all of us had anticipated. This pleasant life we owe to many things--among these is recreation.

This evening, I would like to discuss with you the importance of recreation.

When a large number of people who are naturally industrious and accustomed to bodily labor are suddenly deprived of their exertions, they must find another outlet for their energy. By putting our pentup energy into an all-out recreational effort, we receive in turn a rebounding echo of physical and moral health. Physical fitness is the most vital of all matters that concerns every man, woman, and child in this center. By active participation in our various supervised sports, such as sumo, judo, and baseball, we shall develop healthy bodies. But it is not the claim nor the purpose of sports to merely give us a healthy body alone. From recreation, we get the opportunity to learn and to exercise those fundamentals of good morale, namely; sportsmanship, cooperation, and good clean fun. We must remember that physical and moral health is the dynamic unity, without which we can never hope to retain our happiness.

Aside from its contribution to physical and moral fitness, recreation gives to us our mental education.

Daily at leisure and thinking only of the unfairness of this eva-



education may in time dull a man's senses to such an extent that he shall forever lose his feeling of loyalty toward this country and of his obligations as a citizen. Therefore, the kindergarden of this center provides the youngsters with their proper mental education through simple games and lesson. Similarly, the games of "go" and "shogi" which corresponds to chess and checker in America gives the adults their proper mental stimulation. We in this camp are being put to the test of mental capabilities. To us the world is always changing; a challenging, testing, toughening world, and so we must be mentally equal to adjust ourselves to these changing situations.

The third importance of recreation, aside from its value in giving us physical and moral health and mental education, is its effect as a diversion from the constant strain of partial confinement. Were it that we could not enjoy our various recreations, many people of this center, especially the younger-set, may turn to gang roudyism and unruly conducts to satisfy the cravings for excitement that is within all youth. We are fortunate that we can enjoy our dances and card parties, various sport events and our movies. Many people, wishing to escape the humdrum life that they have led in the past month, turn to sport for action. It is interesting to observe that there are more than two hundred elderly gentlemen who had never played any type of sports in the last few years, and undoubtedly never expected to romp again, are now enthusiastically playing State League baseball. These facts substantiate our conviction that no matter how long our confinement, recreation will find us more fit than ever to face the problems of peace.

The importance of recreation has well been established. Shining



like a bright candle in the dark, recreation will, in this moment of unfortunate circumstance, guide across the river of defeat by its power to give us the foundation to be physically and morally fit, mentally awake, and free from the depression of confinement.

We, as a race of people now prejudiced by war, must prepare ourselves to prove to this nation that we can and will contribute to the future prosperity and peace of all fellow men. Coach Amos Alonzo Stagg poured out his philosophy of life to this center by these words, "Never let depression get hold of you. Rise above it. Fight forward. Be everlastingly determined."

What better opportunity is there to fight forward or to prepare ourselves for this purpose than through recreation.