When I was a boy we got our exercise by walking two miles to school or by jumping into the old swimming hole. Why should there be such a fuss now about recreation facilities?"

Those words, which represented the general way of thinking in America some 20 years ago, are again being voiced. This time in Germany. Only in Bremen does the city government as well as the man on the street do something about bettering recreation facilities for youth and older folk.

The progressive program is directed in particular at "unorganized" youth, that 60 percent of the city's young population who do not belong to clubs or private organizations. Included in this group are many expellees, refugees, trade union youth, youngsters who due to financial reasons quit school before or shortly after the ninth grade (the end of compulsory education), and others who do not know what it is to play a game of soccer or to hit a ball with a bat.

The situation is similar in Bremerhaven, a port like Bremen city. Both are in the state of Bremen—a US enclave deep in the British Zone giving Americans a shipping outlet in Germany.

This is the way things have developed.

The Bremen City youth office in the spring of 1950 set up a recreation program with a chief, a secretary and four assistants to carry out the work. This pioneer project received a HICOG grant-in-aid amounting to DM 38,000 ($9,044) in 1950 and a similar amount this year. German authorities yearly set aside DM 270,000 ($64,260) for the Bremen city youth office and DM 32,000 ($7,616) for youth activities in Bremerhaven. The six Germans have all visited the United States under the HICOG Exchanges Program in connection with recreation activities. All are youthful and, what is important, have a young person's viewpoint.

The four assistants—three men and one woman—work at the city's four youth centers. Two of the centers were recently constructed and the other two were converted from old barracks. Plans call for erection of a fifth, giving Bremen more community centers than other areas of comparable size and population in Germany. The recreation program also includes a summer camp, handicrafts, sports, discussions, indoor and outdoor games.

In Bremerhaven there are playground helpers during the summer months but no full-time regular helpers.

Although Bremen city is well ahead in its organized recreation program, a private non-profit group, the Bremer Jugendfreizeit e. V. (Bremen Youth Recreation Association) was organized in June to follow up the duties of the municipal program and to promote and or-
ONE OF THE FIRST ACTS of the group was to set the wheels in motion for a survey of available facilities and the use of them. Charles B. Cranford, director of the recreation department, San Francisco State College, was in Bremen for two months as a HICOG visiting consultant in community recreation and youth activities to aid in planning the gathering of background information to be used in a master plan. He was succeeded by Mr. Schlenter, superintendent of recreation in Plainfield, N.J., who will work with the group in a similar capacity.

Mr. Cranford's report regarding planning of the survey stated: "It was decided in the beginning that this study should be done by the Germans, because equal in importance to the completion of the survey and the master plan is its acceptance and adoption by the official German community. This report and plan must involve those German elements that are essential to its completion and adoption."

The study will include all leisure-time resources for sports, camping, art, music, dance, drama, clubs and hobbies along with the facilities, leadership, finance, programs, organizations and their relationships. Included will be the cities of Bremen, Bremen-North and Bremerhaven.

Many of the publicly owned recreation and sports facilities have been assigned for the exclusive use of members of private clubs. It is hoped that an agreement can be reached whereby the use of the facilities could be divided between the public and private clubs and that "unorganized" youth may also have an opportunity to use the playgrounds and gymnasiums in private schools.

TO ORGANIZE THE ASSOCIATION more closely, a full-time director was elected in September. He is Alfred Clecior, who has been an active sport participant for many years and once was director of the Danzig sport office. Serving on a trial basis for six months, Mr. Clecior is directing the survey work. An assistant is in Bremerhaven working with a seven-man executive committee on proposed changes. Chairman of that committee is a member of the city council.

The director reports to the executive board every 14 days on progress of the survey. The gathering of information and study of it are expected to be completed within six months. Decisions will be made as to what facilities or activity are lacking in Bremen state and suggestions will determine how these shortcomings can best be remedied. As the corporation is composed of private individuals and receives no funds from the state, requests can be made for introduction of legislation to help bring the program into operation along with the existing recreation activities.

A provision will likely be made to establish a leadership training program for community recreation and youth activity leaders in one of the existing schools.

All of this community and state action offers evidence of why recreation experts have called Bremen "one of the brightest spots in western Germany" in youth activity progress. The change has been slow, but steady, which has proved to be the best way when it concerns changing the ways of thinking or tradition.