

heart of what the whole youth problem is, to have a viable mechanism for citizen participation. I have already talked with the present members of the Board along these lines and asked them to come up with a recommendation. I expect to talk with them after this meeting. But on the rulemaking question, I do not see that as a serious problem. It is one that I would be concerned about, as you are, if we did not recognize it.

Mr. ERLNBORN. Do you feel that the budget for recreation will receive greater attention as a line item in the overall budget, greater attention than it did when it was the budget of the District of Columbia Recreation Board and had them as its champion? Now, it will be just one item in your overall budget.

Commissioner WASHINGTON. Well, I think that is again why it is necessary to develop a citizen mechanism and develop a formidable body of support for the recreation budget. I mean a real formidable one, because I think the budget, as I indicated earlier, is not only paltry, I think the whole program of recreation has been neglected to a degree that I think is unfortunate. In any city it speaks to the whole youth problem. It speaks to enrichment and leisuretime activities of your entire population, every age group. I believe that virtually from the kindergarten through the old people, we should have programs that speak to the needs of this city, and particularly in the area of teenage activity where we can use leisuretime programs not simply for play activities but as real youth developmental programs—the expansion of the entire concept. I think that we should create a mechanism here where we indeed seek out all over the Nation funds from foundations and other places, and it should be done with some resolve, and that money should come in for experiments and demonstrations in the area of leisuretime activity. This is a big business. It focuses on one of our most serious problems, the delinquency problem. I believe if this dedicated Board had had this opportunity to function as they might have and with the full weight of the city government behind them, and with the leadership of the government behind them, that this program that I speak of might have been further along than it is today. But I have great faith that the citizens here, given an opportunity to participate, will support a greater budget and a broader operation in the Recreation Department.

Mr. ERLNBORN. Well, in the interest of time of my colleague I am not going to ask any more questions, but I will just make the observation that I hope you will implement the proposal of an advisory committee when the plan becomes law, as I am sure it will. There is not a resolution of disapproval pending. An advisory committee should be appointed or the Council should be given authority to deliberate in open hearings so the public can have a place to express themselves, as they have had up till now by law. Just to appoint an advisory committee that meets in some room that nobody knows about and the public does not have a chance to participate could not, I believe, be sufficient. I think you would have to have this open to the public to allow a greater participation in the formulation of plans.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Commissioner WASHINGTON. I would agree with you, sir.

Mr. BLATNIK. Our distinguished chairman, Mr. Dawson, is with us this morning. Mr. Chairman, we appreciate not only your being here, but I want the record to show, as most of the witnesses know,