

II. PROGRAM PLANS

The following subdivisions set forth a statement of the problem in each of the eleven fields into which the program is divided, our objectives in those fields, and a statement of the progress made to May 1950. This is followed by an outline of the action planned to July 1951. As already stated, the outline of planned action is not intended to present the details of the operating program, which must be developed in relation to the situation as it exists in various fields from time to time, and which in many cases involves co-ordination and collaboration with other HICOG elements at the headquarters, Land and local levels.

Unless otherwise noted, the comment on "progress" is limited to the U.S. Zone because we do not have sufficient information about developments in the French and British Zones. Similarly, as to "planned action", it is predicated upon existing or prospective German organizations and activities in the U.S. Zone and appropriate action by the HICOG organization. It is hoped to work out a common program in the three Zones, with agreement upon cooperative action and an interchange of materials. Since plans are not yet formulated for each individual program item, the general plan is set out in Part III, subd. 6.

Generally no special mention is made in the program of work with women's and youth organizations. Nevertheless, in each field it is intended to take special account of these factors. There are two reasons. One is that the development in these organizations of an informed interest in public affairs has not progressed as far as in the organizations where men play the predominant role. The second is that women have a numerical majority in Germany, and that youth represents a potent force for good or bad depending on the direction in which this force is oriented.

Throughout the program items mention is made of pamphlets to be issued. It should be understood that these are of German origin except for three translations adapted to German conditions.

1. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT

A. PROBLEM

There is a widespread lack of knowledge and interest in political and governmental affairs among the German people. The party and political systems have developed so as to minimize general public participation and influence. Officials and legislators have felt too little direct responsibility to their constituents. Means for the development and expression of public opinion have been inadequate, and it has been of limited importance. The concept in our word "citizen" — the individual as a participant in community and state, with well-developed rights and obligations — is too little understood.

B. OBJECTIVES

To aid those Germans who seek individually or through organized groups:

(1) to develop an interest among citizens in the study of or participation in public affairs;

(2) to develop and use public opinion in support of democratic improvements in government and politics;

(3) to create active understanding of the rights and obligations of the individual as a citizen toward his community and his state.

(4) to bring German youth and women into the movement as active participants.

C. PROGRESS TO MAY, 1950

There has been considerable progress in this field. A substantial number of citizens' and community groups have been organized under German auspices. Forums have been held on the initiative of Kreis Resident Officers or the "Amerika-Haeuser". The interest of participants has been aroused, and in a limited number of localities has resulted in citizen demand for participation in local government activities, the right to attend and be heard at local council meetings, the right to have reports from local officials, and public support of civic improvements.

On the whole, however, citizens' groups have been more active in the cultural and welfare fields than in public affairs. Comparatively few of them are organized for action or have any specific program in the field of government and politics or for developing practical community responsibility. They represent too small a proportion of the population, and they are not yet so well established that they could survive without outside help if political or official opposition made a determined effort to end them.

German youth especially appears not to have been enlisted in this field. The youth program to date, which has brought a substantial percentage of the younger generation together in cultural and social, athletic and self-help groups, appears to have laid a good foundation for interesting them in public affairs. The potential interest exists. The younger people are well aware of the problems which confront them in Germany, and it is certain that they would grasp eagerly any opportunity to take positive action to meet these problems. But up to the present time they have had no opportunity and no encouragement. The German political system (see Program Item 6) is authoritarian in character and is run by the older leaders. Youth as a whole senses the futility of the present system, but has no idea of the steps which it can take to correct this.

To a lesser extent the same statements are true of women's organizations.

D. PLANNED ACTION

(1) General

Existing groups interested in political and governmental activities will be offered suggestions for specific programs in the fields of local government, citizen-official relations, and civil liberties. (See Program Headings 2, 3, and 4.) Aid and advice will be given to Germans who wish to organize new groups.

Special attention will be given to German youth and women's associations. Consultants to advise on