HANDS are being extended across the sea by active American youth organizations to advise and assist German youth groups. A spontaneous reception for the exchange of democratic ideas and international good-will in club activities has greeted the "Youth Helps Youth" project of the Armed Forces Assistance to German Youth Activities program. As a result of radio, letter and magazine publicity, the GYA Section of EUCOM Headquarters is deluged with requests and offers from US young people's organizations to establish cooperative liaison with similar German organizations.

"Youth Helps Youth" is a program which seeks to pair several hundred American organizations with an equal number of German ones composed of persons of the same ages, interests and religions. This pairing, of course, must be done by correspondence.

The GYA Section feels that much can be accomplished by having Americans tell Germans in their own words some of the benefits of living under a democratic system. Through direct contact, Germans have the opportunity of finding out that Americans, too, have problems. And finally, American youth groups are able to send much in the way of materials, supplies and funds to supplement the aid which GYA is able to give.

THE "Youth Helps Youth" project tries to fill one of the most urgent needs of German youth—contact with the outside world. After years of living on a social and intellectual island under the Nazis, German young people experience a hunger for news of what other countries have written—novels, poetry, drama, essays, music. They are eager to find out what boys and girls of other lands are thinking and doing.

There are not enough Americans in Germany to furnish this personal contact that is a needed for the 2,500,000 German youth in the US Zone. Lack of appropriated money, shortages of assigned GYA personnel and the difficulty of maintaining large numbers of volunteers have made it difficult to assist more than about 17 percent of all German young persons in the US Zone between the ages of 10 and 25.

The "Youth Helps Youth" project was developed as a means of reaching more young people and influencing them perhaps even more effectively than through the normal operation of youth centers, sports activities or discussion groups.

A "pen-pal" type of correspondence for individuals had already been set up by Military Government and hundreds of German youngsters had already taken advantage of it. However, the "Youth Helps Youth" project was designed to be a different kind of correspondence. It was to be between youth groups, not individuals.

IN ORDER to make the project effective, it was necessary to arouse widespread interest both in the United States and in Germany. The latter was not difficult, but the former was. The German Youth Activities Section of EUCOM Headquarters sent, through official channels, letters which introduced and explained the project to all of the headquarters of youth-serving organizations in the United States.

Now, approximately five months since the program began, 1,700 letters proposing the plan have been mailed to the United States. In response, 1,300 affirmative letters have been received.

The 4-H Clubs in America and the Future Farmers of America, both organizations sponsored by the US Department of Agriculture, have been especially enthusiastic in their response.

The National Recreation Association, Catholic and Protestant youth groups, Camp Fire Girls, and junior and senior high school groups have also furnished many boy and girl units for correspondence.

Radio stations are now becoming interested. Some of them have asked to adopt an entire youth center as correspondents so that they may air the German letters on their youth programs.

Favorable magazine publicity has also helped to interest new organizations. A recent feature article in the National Geographic Magazine, for example increased the number of letters from America.

EXPLAINING the purpose and setup of the project has been time-consuming. In at least 900 cases the GYA Section has found it necessary to send additional explanatory letters. And in almost all cases there was the necessary delay on replies while boards of directors and executive committees were consulted as to whether or not the local group would participate. In an few cases, letters came back saying that their organization already had a project of their own in Germany. Others replied that they were enthusiastic and that they wished to begin immediately.

The Department of Army's Public Information Division in Washington, cooperating in publicizing the project, placed spot announcements on 2,300 radio stations throughout the United States. After only a few weeks, results of these broadcasts were seen. Letters began to arrive at the EUCOM GYA office in Heidelberg from all parts of the United States. Some of the people who listened to the broadcast needed additional explanatory letters. Others heard the message correctly the first time and wrote, for example, "I belong to the Methodist Youth Fellowship. We have decided that we want to be a part of 'Youth Helps Youth.' Please find us a German group with whom we can correspond."

The success of the project can be measured by the volume of litters (Continued next page)
coming from the United States. Each letter makes it possible, through post and major command GYA officer, to say to another eager German youth group: “This is to be your American correspondent. Now you may write your first letter to them.”

The net-score to date of American groups which have actually been paired up with German groups is about 350. The GYA section will not feel that the project has really been well established until at least 1,000 groups have contacted each other.

The benefits to German and American youth which can be realized from the “Youth Helps Youth” project are many. Aside from the fact that American groups will be sending boxes of supplies to Germany for youth groups to use in their club activities, there should be a development of friendly understanding between young Americans and Germans. And this is a step, GYA believes, in the direction toward international understanding and tolerance.

Cultural Service

The functions and responsibilities of the nine Education and Cultural Service Centers located in the US area of occupation have been broadened in scope so that these centers can serve all educational fields of Military Government, previously the Service Centers have been limited primarily to the writing and preparation of textbooks and materials of instruction as well as to the development of curricula and courses of study.

In the future the Education and Cultural Service Centers will provide materials and facilities for workshop projects, discussion groups, research, school publications, radio, film, and other teaching aids for the use of education, youth activities, theater and music, women’s affairs, and similar MG activities.

It is planned that each of the nine centers will have at least one branch center within the geographical area it serves, so that every part of the US-occupied area will be within reasonable distance of either a main center or a branch.

American, German Youth Cooperate in Nuremberg

TWO years ago, a few Nuremberg boys suggested to some Americans stationed in Nuremberg that they would like to become members of a club in which German and American youth could meet on a basis of equality. The idea had wide appeal, and from the suggestion a German-American Youth Club was formed in December 1946, growing to its present membership of several hundred.

The club program includes many fields of democratic interest. On all evenings except Wednesdays small groups meet to study languages and to pursue special hobbies. A chamber music group, a jazz band, a dramatic society and hiking and sports groups are all part of the general activities.

But the club’s main attraction is free discussion in which members of the German and American communities participate equally. These Wednesday night forums draw large crowds and arouse considerable interest. On the eve of the Nuremberg City Council elections, for example, the club invited the local chairman of the five political parties to take part in a forum. Each speaker was given the opportunity to be heard and to explain his party’s views.

A recent opinion poll showed that there is practically no topic which, if treated in an interesting manner, would not draw a crowd and provoke a vigorous discussion: it is not only Germany’s political future, the atom bomb or student life in America these boys and girls wish to learn about, but also modern art or authors whose works they were not permitted to read during the Nazi regime. They like to match their wits against one another in a typical American quiz program, often teaming up in friendly competition with the students of the US Dependents’ School.

However, one problem is a lack of inclination to assume personal respon-