ONE OF THE THORNIEST problems confronting US Public Health officials in Germany today is the proper organization of the medical, dental and pharmacist professions and their relationship to the German social structure.

At present extremists with totalitarian tendencies closely resembling those of the Nazis are again attracting a large following among the health professions, exercising a rapidly growing influence and squeezing out of important positions honest democrats and persons considered "too friendly to the Americans."

Concerted efforts will have to be made immediately to strengthen the hard-pressed democratic element in the German health professions before its position becomes hopeless. The Office of the United States High Commissioner for Germany should scrutinize the political implications of all orders directly or indirectly affecting health service, refrain from steps likely to defeat the purpose of democratization, and do everything in its power to help the Germans solve their own health problems according to their proven needs. After four years of occupation and with the shift of emphasis in our program from one of operations to re-orienting the Germans to develop more democratic institutions, many steps already have been taken to strengthen these democratic elements.

This review of public health in Germany from 1945 to 1949 is a digest of a speech made last October by Lt. Col. Walter R. de Forest on "Public Health in Germany during the US Occupation" before the American Public Health Association in New York.

A LONG THIS LINE the cultural exchange program, among others, has assumed increasing importance. Through this plan German public health officials are being brought abreast of the best and latest developments in public health matters by the sending of German public health representatives to the United States for study and observation. American doctors, nurses and other experts in numerous health fields have been brought to Germany. In addition, the Institute of Public Affairs, through its Medical Section, is helping to spread democratic techniques in health administration as well as up-to-date knowledge in the fields of medical science.

In assisting the German medical profession to get back on its feet, Military Government collaborated extensively with international health agencies such as the World Health Organization, the Danish Red Cross Tuberculosis Mission whereby 586,000 German children have been tuberculin tested and 209,000 vaccinated to date; and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) bringing additional assistance for the care of mothers and children in Germany.

Under State Department control and the further withdrawal by Occupation Authorities from operational func-

Germany's road back to health has been solidly paved with cooperation from international health groups. The Danish Red Cross, cooperating with the Public Health Branch, is continuing its inoculation program in the US Zone; at left, Dr. Viskum of Copenhagen applies test ointment while Bavarian health official holds the youngster. Right, girls in a small one-room school near Dachau await first examination; they'll get two tests and one inoculation. (Photos by PRD HICOG)
THE FIRST PROBLEM made necessary a continuous appraisal of the nutritional state of the population. A street weighing program was inaugurated by American personnel and later carried on by the Germans. Under this program approximately 100,000 persons selected at random were weighed each month and from changes in the observed weights it was possible to evaluate the broad trends. In the second quarter of 1947 the lowest point was reached with the average weight of adult females down to 116.7 pounds and of adult males to 134.5 pounds. However, with the feeding programs improvement occurred and it became apparent by Jan. 1, 1949, that this program was no longer necessary and was discontinued.

Nutritional Survey Teams, first American and later German, functioned in those areas where it seemed they might be most needed and periodically surveyed the nutritional status in cities of more than 25,000 population and in the Western Sectors of Berlin.

The problem of the rapid rise in the venereal disease rate reached its peak in August 1946 with rates for syphilis of 30 and for gonorrhea of 90 per 10,000 population per annum. US Public Health branches combatted the VD problem with every available resource although it was not until spring of 1947 that it was possible to obtain adequate penicillin supplies from the United States and Great Britain to start a vigorous campaign for treatment of VD in conjunction with a control program with the German authorities. However, the downward trend in venereal rates, apparent by September 1946, was brought about by the importation of penicillin and the setting up of 96 VD treatment hospitals.

This control of venereal diseases was considerably implemented by the passage on a quadripartite basis of Control Council Directive 52 which is bringing about the passage of a uniform and modern venereal disease control law throughout western Germany.

LACK OF ADEQUATE food and the high incidence of diseases brought the German population to its lowest ebb with indications of excessive morbidity. Even in the face of these conditions, the birth rate which at its steepest decline was 16.3 per 1,000 population per annum in the fourth quarter of 1947, as compared to the United States average of 24.6 per 1,000, was increasing and the total mortality rate, which at its peak was 15.4 deaths per 1,000 population per annum, as compared to the United States average of 11.1 per 1,000, was decreasing.

By 1948 the Stale Public Health Departments were functioning satisfactorily, medical supplies, including streptomycin, were becoming more available, hospitals had been repaired and hospital bed space was meeting demand. The increase in quantity and variety in the food supply had overcome the problem of malnutrition and with it, many accompanying problems. The tuberculosis mortality rate declined and is approximately the same as the present rate in Great Britain and well below the prewar rate in France and other parts of Europe. Birth and death rates are approaching the normal, and school children are healthy.