Mary Coppock (center), coordinator of work camp programs of the Commission, distributes materials to young mothers.

Dr. K. Goeritz, chief at hospital, shows Kurtis Friend Naylor, head of Commission, mold used to support leg casts.

Carpenter works on wooden leg for patient in hospital which Commission helped rebuild.

Entrance to hospital where students did their work.

Student volunteers mixing cement for a drain. They also painted, finished children's ward.
“Fellowship of Love”

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ACTIVE THROUGHOUT the western zones of Germany are private US welfare agencies which are making vital contributions to HICOG’s over-all program of re-orientation. Unheralded and unsung, members of these agencies are going among the Germans, spreading the gospel of freedom and individual rights.

A good illustration of such activity is the work of the Brethren Service Commission, though others in the field, such as the Quakers, YMCA, YWCA, Unitarian Service Committee, World Council of Churches, Caritas, and the University of Chicago, have been doing good deeds since the beginning of the occupation.

Beginning as a purely relief organization in Germany shortly after the occupation, the Brethren Service Commission has gone much further than ordinary relief. Probably their greatest achievement to date is their participation in the cultural exchanges program. They effected the first exchange involving teen-aged German boys and girls. One group of 90 rural youngsters has already been sent to the United States to live with middle class, rural American families and to attend American high schools in 15 different states. Another group of 140 is ready to sail in May.

The Brethren Service Commission has provided homes with American families, part of the travel funds, and $10 per month pocket money for the teen-aged Germans.

The author, Dr. Leroy Vogel (center), talks with student volunteers and clinic physicians about their program.
Other similar groups are being readied for shipment to the States at the present time.

All the youngsters will spend one year in a completely American environment, and then will return to their native country. The only hope of the Brethren Service Commission is that when the young Germans do return they will tell their friends and neighbors of America and thus win more friends for the United States.

THE BRETHREN SERVICE Commission is the social and welfare arm of the Church of the Brethren, which was founded in 1708 in Schwarzenau, Germany, by Alexander Mack. Forced out of Germany, the church and its flock found its way to Germantown, Pennsylvania, at the invitation of the Mennonites, who, in turn, had been invited by the Society of Friends. With the slogan of "Fellowship of love," the church has grown to 200,000 members, with congregations in the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico and China.

The members support six colleges, a soap factory, the entire produce of which goes to relief, a relief processing plant in New Windsor, Ind., which they donated to the World Council of Churches, a group of missionaries, and the social and welfare arm of the church, the Commission.

Though not officially organized until 1936, the Commission was active in the Spanish revolution, when it serviced both the Loyalists and the Falangists. Since then the members of the Commission, most of them student volunteers, have been going wherever they have heard the plea of help. They maintained their welfare activities behind the Iron Curtain until they were forcibly driven out by the communist rulers of the area, and even then left only because they were afraid harm would come to their friends in those countries.

In Germany, their entire program is under the direction of six professional Commission workers, six student volunteers, three paid secretaries, and the wives of two of the professional workers. Kurtis Friend Naylor, director of the German program, also serves as the administrative assistant for the entire European program of the Com-

mission. His wife, as hostess of the Brethren house in Kassel, serves almost 500 guest meals each month, and practically mothers the six young student volunteers, as well as her own two youngsters.

THE VOLUNTEERS, three boys and three girls, all in their teens, are probably the best loved foreigners to have ever set foot in the great industrial city of northern Hesse. As soon as they arrived in Germany, in September 1949, they rolled up their sleeves and took on rehabilitation projects. First off, they aided in the construction of a work camp in Goettingen, and then, immediately thereafter, started on a project of their own, which they selected themselves: they found an orthopedic clinic outside of Kassel that badly needed construction help.

The clinic, caring for 88 patients, was being manned by two refugee physicians from Danzig, who had moved their clinic, patients, equipment and all to Denmark and then down to Kassel. The young student volunteers began clearing rubble, installing an open drain, working in the clinic, holding recreation periods for the patients, and then painted and finished the interior of a 25-bed children's ward. On the physical-work side, the girls wielded
shovel and spade along with the boys. The students feel, however, that their most vital contribution was the fostering of friendship and understanding between Americans and the staff and patients of the clinic.

Next, the students took over an old glider base and helped convert it into a modern camp for 6,000 children. They changed an old hangar into a day room, a feat that involved the removal of 60 cubic meters of earth and the laying of a cement floor. Again the girls did the manual labor alongside their male colleagues.

Other Service projects include the sponsorship of DPs to the United States. They are doing particularly yeoman service since they sponsor people refused sponsorship or neglected by other church groups. Especially, couples of mixed religious marriages have been sponsored by the Commission: 75 percent of the Greek Orthodox emigrees have been backed by the Commission, and they are the only known group to send Mohammedans to the United States.

The Commission has also been most active in the heifer project committee, which has distributed 11,000 head of livestock to needy parts of the postwar world. In 1949 a program to supply Germany with fresh milk by the introduction of tubercular-free cattle was started. This project donates a heifer to a local citizen, who, in turn, must give the calf of this heifer to another farmer. Twelve goats and 373 heifers, of 1,200 projected, have already arrived in Germany. When the blockade of Berlin started, German drivers could not drive supplies to the beleaguered city. Since Allied nationals were still permitted entry to the city, the student volunteers took over the driving of trucks from Bremen, and then on to Berlin with urgently needed relief supplies.

During the past year, the Commission sent about 300 tons of relief supplies to Germany. One-third of the supplies has been food, another third clothing, and the last third soap from their own factory.

The Commission also started, in cooperation with the YMCA, the first private "boys town" in Germany. Near Stuttgart, in an 11th century castle called Kaltenstein, the Commission has organized a home for "dangerous youth," which houses about 100 youngsters who might be heading for juvenile delinquency. The boys work in agriculture and the workshops, which include machines, carpentry, shoe-repair, bakery, tailor, and sign painting. They have their own self-governing body, with a court and police department. The Commission representatives to this project, Mr. and Mrs. Byron Royer, live in the castle with the boys, and act as guides to the youths.

Four work camps were operated by the Commission during the past summer. These camps built a community house and sports field in addition to having Americans and Germans live together, with Americans paying a dollar a day for the privilege of working on a project.

Most important of all, according to the personnel representing the Commission in Germany, is the daily contacts with Germans in all walks of life. The Commission members emphasize that they have no church in Europe and that they are doing no missionary work here. They are here solely because they believe in the "fellowship of love," and because they have an abiding faith in that system we call democracy. They are Americans who want to paint the American picture for the world.

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