US HIGH COMMISSIONER John J. McCloy bade "bon voyage" Aug. 9 to approximately 350 German students, teachers and leaders in various fields, leaving for periods of up to one year of study and work in the United States. The group is visiting America under the HICOG exchange program.

After briefing and processing, during which they heard a farewell address from the High Commissioner at the HICOG Headquarters Building in Frankfurt, the group departed by special train for Cannes, France, where they embarked on the Italian steamer S.S. Brazil for the United States.

In addition to studying one semester in US teachers' colleges, 100 young German teachers, included in the group, will have an opportunity to visit and practice teaching in American schools, as part of a program to acquaint them with the democratic aspects of American education. Twenty-five teen-agers will spend a year with American families and attend US high schools in urban communities.

Most of the remainder of the group are undergraduate university students who will study for an academic year at American universities and colleges, specializing in economics, political science, journalism and other social studies, designed to equip them for future roles of responsibility in a democratic Germany. A few experts and leaders in economic, social and political fields who will study American institutions in their respective vocations, are also in the group.

Most of the visits of the exchangees, who come from all parts of western Germany, have been arranged and financed by the State Department, in conjunction with Exchanges Division, Office of Public Affairs. The Stateside

arrangements were made in co-operation with numerous American universities and civic groups.

The text of Mr. McCloy's address follows:

I AM VERY HAPPY to join you briefly in the pleasant, though rather involved, task of preparing you for a trip to the United States. They say that "travel is broadening" but some of you may find yourselves thinner after completing the complicated processing required by our efficient Exchanges Division staff in getting you on board ship.

However, I am sure that all of you will cheerfully bear these problems when you consider the difficulties of travel and the fluctuations of shipping space these days. Moreover, you are about to embark upon one of the largest and most complex programs of this kind ever undertaken by the government of the United States.

For many years, all free nations have promoted the exchange of students, teachers and experts between themselves. The United States has participated generously in these programs. But never before have we organized the exchange of so many people for such serious purposes with another country as has now been instituted between our nation and Germany.

Last year some 1,500 of your fellows from all parts of western Germany and Berlin and from all walks of life were brought to the United States. Others were aided in visiting other democratic nations. Scores of American and European experts and leaders in the many vocations of democratic life were brought to Germany. This year an even greater number will join the international exchange.

IN SPONSORING SUCH a vast program, there is danger that our motives will be misunderstood. In fact, there has already been some evidence of this and we have heard whispered insinuations that our efforts are a grandiose propaganda scheme, an attempt to "Americanize" the German visitors, a move to transplant American customs and institutions to Germany. This is all a parcel of nonsense which pervades so much of the irresponsible comment and so much of the deliberately distorted comment one has to endure these days.

It is, of course, true that we hope to bring about a better understanding between our countries by this exchange of persons. International understanding is always a major factor of world peace. But our ultimate objectives are broader and deeper than these limited aims and I hope that you will all approach this trip with the conviction that our objectives are as we state them. For if you do not, I fear you and your country will not gain anything of value from the visit.

In the first place, we do not restrict our exchange program solely to an operation involving Germany and the United States. We are equally interested in having
intelligent, forward-looking Germans visit other nations of the western world, just as we are eager to bring many of the leaders and experts from these nations to Germany, and we are prepared to give very substantial financial aid to bring this about. For you and we are concerned here with the tasks of renewing and strengthening the cultural ties which once bound Germany to western democratic civilization.

Under the perverted policies of the Nazis, and through the isolation of years of war, the benefits of growth and change in the free world were barred to Germany. Such precious things as the independence of the judiciary, the objectivity of education, free expression in music, art and literature, the rights of labor, to name but a few examples, were distorted or suppressed by the police state.

TODAY GOOD PROGRESS has been made in restoring the major freedoms in Germany and the vestiges of the autocratic past are gradually being modified. The free exchange of ideas and information between Germany and the western world is steadily increasing. Through the cultural exchange program we hope to hasten this restoration of Germany in the society of free nations, and — even more important — add the human element to Germany’s relations with other nations.

In America you will meet many colleagues and counterparts whose works and interests are similar to yours. You will form lasting contacts which will grow in value and mutual benefit for years to come. It is these millions of threads of friendship and respect which form the enduring bonds between nations in a peaceful international society.

Another inestimable product of aiding Germans to visit America and other western nations is the daily experience of living and working in a country which for a century and a half has dwelt under a representative and democratic form of government with no class distinctions. The people’s control of government, tolerance for the ideas and faiths of others, and the jealous protection of individual rights, are the keystones of that government; and if you see these principles breached here and there, you will still find that they are the basically accepted foundations of the American society, and if and when they are breached you will find a strong reaction.

A few months in America should, and I believe will, aid you immeasurably in vivifying these principles and arm you with the experience and knowledge to strengthen them in Germany.

WE DO NOT HOLD UP the institutions and customs of the United States as paragons of virtue and progress. Every society has its imperfections, and there are many in America, though public-spirited citizens are trying constantly to rectify them. We certainly do not expect anyone to attempt the literal transfer of American techniques to Germany.

Nor do we expect or wish any propagandistic utterances from you on your return. Strictly American teaching techniques would probably produce confusion in German classrooms. An American-style newspaper would hardly attract a large German following. The institutions and customs of a society are bred by local conditions and heritages. A foreign product can never be introduced without some modification.

However, I am sure that all of you will find, as we find here, new ideas, fresh approaches to common problems and other innovations which can be adapted and combined with the best elements of both countries to the greatest benefit of yourself and your fellows.

Certainly that is one way that America progressed — by accepting from other nations, fusing with our own achievements and thus developing a superior product, an improved institution, a better technique. For example, we are indebted to the German social security system for parts of our own; German education has contributed much to the American school system. It is time now that Germans recognize the great progress and changes which have occurred in the world outside, and look objectively at other societies for the improvement of their own.

IT IS OBVIOUS that the success of the cultural exchange program depends in large part on the understanding co-operation of the German people. If Germans returning from the United States and other countries meet only indifference or resentment from their colleagues and members of their community, as has happened in some cases — then the value of their travel has been limited.

An increasing number of Germans will be returning from the United States in the future; many will have new proposals and ideas which are certainly worth an objective hearing and a fair trial. By making use of the experience of these travelers many groups and communities can reap benefits from the program and this is an aim.

In many cases we have found that liberal and progressive Germans, whom we would like to offer a tour of study or observation in the United States, are unable to go because of the opposition of the employer, fear for the job, or lack of financial support at home. Here, again, the interest and co-operation of the German people is needed for the continued success of cultural exchange. In such instances, a little interest and co-operation by the responsible persons might compensate in new experiences and skills for the temporary loss of the individual.

Within a month you will be scattered throughout the 48 states. You have my best wishes that the associations and experiences you find there will be pleasant and enriching. When you pass that impressive statue in New York harbor — the Statue of Liberty — remember many millions of people have passed her before you and she has power to be a reality to all of them.

You will find the country concerned, unhappy, but determined — you will be there during a period of some strain. But I know you will be all the more interested as you will see a great democratic nation reluctantly but certainly organizing itself to meet another threat not only to its own liberty but to liberty throughout the world. Think of that and what it may mean to the preservation of the culture and enlightenment of Europe when you pass that statue.