The CHAIRMAN. General Cumming, please.

STATEMENT OF HUGH S. CUMMING, SURGEON GENERAL, PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES

General CUMMING. Mr. Chairman, they say that a good play needs no epilogue. There is very little which I need to add to that of the Assistant Secretary, except to say that I am in thorough sccord with section 8. It is treading no new ground; it is an extension of an attempt on the part of the Federal Government many years ago which has been eminently successful. It is not a problematical thing.

The CHAIRMAN. What is the normal appropriation for the Public Health Service now of the Federal Government?

General CUMMING. The total appropriation runs about $10,500,000, and with the reserve taken off, about $900,000. I think it runs about $10,000,000, the whole thing.

Senator COUZENS. How many commissioned officers have you in the service?

General CUMMING. Senator, I will explain that set-up a little later, and answer Senator Costigan, too. There are 389 on active duty.

Senator GERRY. Would this bill about double your appropriation?

General CUMMING. I would; yes, sir. Senator, with reference to this civil-service question. The people employed under this sort of cooperative work with States, that is to say, the local and State health people are not under Federal civil service. They are exempt from the Civil Service Commission formally. They are appointed upon recommendation of the State and local health authorities.

The CHAIRMAN. If this provision should be adopted as written here, though, they have to be under civil service?

General CUMMING. No, sir; I think not. We might have that studied.

The CHAIRMAN. You had better study it, because some of those who are going to advocate it might not be for it if it were to be under the civil service.

General CUMMING. The standard which is to be maintained in the local personnel is set up in a conference of all of the State and Territorial health officers. It is a matter of common agreement among them and the Public Health Service.

Senator COUZENS. They are all paid by the Federal Government?

General CUMMING. In part by the Federal Government. Since we started this work, the States have averaged somewhere around $8 to $10 for every one spent by the Federal Health Service. That was in normal times. The organization of the Service is a small corps of Regular officers, medical officers, sanitary engineers, and scientific people, which corresponds very much to our Regular Army, and as I say, they are less than 400—about 390. Then we have between seven and eight hundred doctors employed who are selected from the civil-service list. They correspond, generally speaking, to the Army Reserve or National Guard. The only people we have in the Public Health Service, speaking of the whole service, who are not under civil service, is the grade or classification of about $1,100 per annum, which have been exempted, and which correspond to charwomen and laborers at hospitals and quarantine stations.

Senator COSTIGAN. Has that proven a satisfactory method for the selection of positions through the civil service?

General CUMMING. I do not think you get as good a type possibly in times of prosperity as you do in times of adversity.

Senator COSTIGAN. Because of the competition?

General CUMMING. Yes, sir. I think we are very fortunate, Mr. Chairman, in having at least two members of your committee who have had experience with this cooperation. I see former Governor Byrd, who borrowed one of our trained officers to help in reorganizing an already excellent organization in Virginia. The first governor whom I recall who borrowed one of our officers is Senator Walsh of Massachusetts, who I think is on your committee. We helped to redraft the State laws of Massachusetts, and afterwards loaned them an officer to put in effect. And Mr. Roosevelt, the Governor of New York, now President Roosevelt, borrowed an officer for the same purpose. We are now doing the same work for several other States.

The scheme which we have here is a well tried out scheme, in other words. And it is very urgently needed at this time.

I shall be glad to answer any questions.

Senator COUZENS. I notice that in section 803 (a) it says "Elibigle lists of the Civil Service Commission." Does that carry the classified salary list with it?

General CUMMING. I think it would, by law.

Senator COUZENS. I see that it is not used in this particular paragraph, the question of the classification of salaries, and I wondered if the civil service in itself carried that with it. If not, it ought to be added.

General CUMMING. I never thought of that point. The bill was written by a bill drafter, and I imagine they took that into consideration.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there any questions?

Senator BARKLEY. Doctor, for the record and so that we may understand, will you explain just what all-time health service in a county does and what it means to the people?

General CUMMING. I think what it does for the people in large part, Senator, has already been told you very graphically by Miss Roche, in the decline in the death rates in those particular diseases which are more or less affected by public-health work in the field as contrasted with those which require research. A county set-up, a minimum, contemplates a full-time health officer who is trained in public-health work for public health is now as much of a specialty as neurology or pediatrics, or eye and ear disease. There is so much contemplated in public health, one or more sanitary inspectors, one or more public-health nurses, and of course clerical services for statistics, and so forth. That is a minimum and of course has to be enlarged upon in any county of any size.

Senator BARKLEY. What is the total cost of maintaining marine hospitals of the country?

General CUMMING. We have more patients than ever now, because we are running the C. C. C. cases, and the United States employees' compensation cases in addition to the Coast Guard and the merchant marine and so on as formerly. It runs about $5,500,000. Our cost per diem was about $3 last year. It is running now about $3.09.

Senator BARKLEY. The broadening of the functions of the marine hospital to take in the C. C. C. camps and others probably to a large extent would relate the marine hospitals to the public health,

but as an original proposition, do you think that the cost of marine hospitals ought to be charged against the general public health?

General CUMMING. Well, I think that is a convenience for the Congress in carrying it under one general appropriation. It is set up separately in your general appropriation act, as you know.

Senator BARKLEY. Yes; I know that.

General CUMMING. And that fund cannot be diverted for other purposes. That has been carried for many, many years in the terms of the appropriation.

Senator BARKLEY. I realize that, but I wonder—it is not a matter of any particular importance, because we have to take care of that any way—but whether in marine hospitals which are originally dedicated for those who are engaged in the marine service, whether that should not have been carried under a different department so as not to confuse it with the strict Public Health Service.

General CUMMING. It is an essential part of the Public Health Service. For instance, it is a reservoir for the trained medical officers. It is the only place we have to train them; it is a place for clinical research; it is an essential part of our maritime quarantine, and we could not do very well without them, I think. We have a system of sending officers back to freshen up on bedside medicine from the field.

Senator BARKLEY. You do think then that in view of the general expansion of its functions in the matter of health and care, that it is an essential part of the Public Health Service.

General CUMMING. A very important part, yes, sir.

Senator BARKLEY. What is your experience or your observation or your opinion—we have been talking about the Civil Service—as to whether or not a civil service examination may be actually relied upon always to reveal the best doctor?

General CUMMING. I do not think it does, to be frank with you. I think the matter of personality and integrity and judgment, which are very difficult to judge from a written civil service examination, can probably be better ascertained by a personal interview. I think all of you gentlemen who have been here a long time know that we have never had any partisan politics in our selections, but on the other hand, I think the Civil Service is a great protection and, balancing values, so to speak. It is much better than not to have the Civil Service selection.

Senator BARKLEY. Does it operate to sort of weed out the unfit?

General CUMMING. Very much, and I do not see how we could get along without the Civil Service. I would hate to undertake to run the service without it.

Senator BARKLEY. It saves you an alibi sometimes?

The CHAIRMAN. You would have just about as much trouble as we have, I suppose.

Senator LONERGAN. Can you tell us to what extent the rural areas of the Nation are without doctors?

General CUMMING. That has been worked over for several years by a committee. Dr. Sydenstricker and Dr. Falk can give you much more detailed information on that than I can.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, General Cumming.

The next witness is Dr. Underwood.