

The current formal transfer of these responsibilities from a division within the Public Health Service to a separate division within the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, is heralded by its proponents as an "upgrading" of this activity. Other observers interpret this move as leading to an estrangement of cooperative relationships in technical aid and services between the Federal Government and the States, which had long been fostered under the auspices of the Public Health Service.

Beginning in 1912 that agency created a Streams Investigation Station in Cincinnati, the purpose of which was to conduct fundamental research on water pollution and to assist the States in advancing their programs. Over the years this modest venture produced the richest dividends. Cincinnati became the Mecca, not only for State personnel, but for people throughout the world who sought knowledge on pollution control techniques.

It was an acknowledgment of the competence and capabilities of the Public Health Service in the field of water pollution that led to designation of this agency as the appropriate one to administer the Water Pollution Control Act, first passed in 1948. The act was designed to strengthen State administration and specifically cited the intention to provide Federal technical aid and services toward this end. In this area of endeavor the PHS not only excelled, but had developed a nice sense of rapport among the States.

Conservation groups who had fought for the passage of legislation that would have supplanted State control with Federal control, not only were dissatisfied with the act, but also with the fact that by tradition the PHS was more scientifically oriented than regulatory minded. Thus what might have pleased the States in terms of a partnership relationship was not at all acceptable to those who favored aggressive Federal control.

When the act was amended in 1956 to strengthen enforcement provisions under the auspices of the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, the designation of the Surgeon General of the PHS to administer the act was continued. But in 1961 when further changes were made to emphasize enforcement the administrative responsibilities were given solely and directly to the Secretary of HEW. Although throughout these changes the Secretary continued to use the PHS for conduct of the program, it gradually became apparent to the States that they were actually dealing with two different entities in PHS—a new group intent only on enforcement aspects and the original component that now retained only those duties related to the technical and grant-in-aid elements of the program. As time went on the pace of intervention in matters relating to enforcement increased and it became quite obvious that the dominant thrust of PHS activity was to be in the direction of compliance proceedings.

The 1965 amended version of the previously twice amended act establishes a Water Pollution Control Administration in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Thus the Public Health Service has been formally stripped of all administrative concern with pollution control.

Whether or not this event represents an "upgrading" of the status of water pollution affairs in the Federal hierarchy remains to be seen. Some observers believe that this is only an interim step. To give