Provisional Information on Selected Notifiable Diseases in the United States and on
Deaths in Selected Cities for Week Ended December 29, 1956

There were few radical changes in incidence of reportable
diseases in 1956 as compared with 1955.

After a temporary rise in incidence of diptheria which be­
gan in the latter half of 1955 and extended into the first half of
1956, the number of reported cases began to decline. The 1956
total is slightly more than 20 percent below the total for 1955, and
the total for the last half of 1956 is about 40 percent under that
for the same period of the previous year. However, several
States reported more cases in 1956 than in 1955, and some lo­
calized outbreaks continued to occur. In the most recent one, it
was clearly evident that the level of immunity in the involved
population was far below that needed to prevent this infection.

The number of reported cases of infectious encephalitis in
1956 was about 50 percent in excess of that for 1955. This
disease category includes postinfectious as well as arthropod­orne (mosquito) types of infection. Localized outbreaks and
sporadic cases of the latter occurred in various parts of the
country. Human cases of eastern equine encephalomyelitis, prin­
cipally in children, were reported in Massachusetts and
Maryland. Virus was isolated from brain tissue of fatal cases.
Confirmed cases in horses were also reported in these States
and in New Jersey, Delaware, and Alabama. Outbreaks of this
disease in birds on pheasant farms located in Connecticut,
Massachusetts, and New Jersey were confirmed by virus iso­
lation. Pools of mosquitoes captured in New Jersey and Geor­
gia also yielded virus. Western equine encephalomyelitis infec­
tions in man were not common in 1956. Laboratory confirmed
cases were reported in Texas and California, and scattered
cases in 5 other western States. A large number of cases of the
St. Louis type of infection, mostly in adults, occurred in
localized epidemics in 2 areas each in Kentucky and Colorado,
and single areas of Kansas and Texas. In Indiana, no outbreak
was defined, but a number of cases have been confirmed by
serologic tests.

The provisional number of psittacosis cases reported in
1956 is about 90 percent in excess of the number for 1955. One
or more cases occurred in 38 different States. The 6 States
reporting the largest numbers were North Carolina with 76,
Minnesota 62, California 44, Oregon 43, Illinois 36, and Texas
35. A great majority of the cases for which epidemiological
records were received had contact with parakeets. Contact with
ducks, chickens, and pigeons was also reported as probable
sources of infection. Laboratory infection was indicated in 2
cases. A large proportion of the cases reported in Oregon fol­
lowed contact with turkeys on farms, in poultry processing
plants and rendering plants situated in the northwestern part of
the State. Texas also reported cases in which contact with
turkeys was established as the probable source of infection.

There was an increase in incidence of typhoid fever in
1956. Thirty States reported more cases than in 1955. Early
in the year, numerous cases were reported in several mid­
western States from which the same phage-type of organism
was recovered. Although some widely distributed food prod­
uct was suspected as the vehicle of infection, definite proof of
such a source could not be found. During the summer, another
group of cases, also reported from a number of States, was
traced to a church camp meeting attended by several hundred
people. Epidemiological evidence indicated that the water sup­
ply of the camp was the likely medium of spread of the infec­
tion. A known carrier who harbored the same phage-type of
organism as that recovered from the majority of the cases had
attended the camp meeting and may have been the original
source of infection.

The number of cases of infectious hepatitis reported in
1956 was about 40 percent below the total for 1955, and 60 per­
cent below that for 1954. Meningococcal infections and typhus
fever cases were also reported in smaller numbers in 1956.
There were no confirmed cases of smallpox but several sus­
picious cases were investigated. A review of poliomyelitis in­
cidence in 1956 appeared in last week’s “Morbidity and Mor­
tality Weekly Report.”

SUMMARY OF MORTALITY

During the 52-week period January 1 through December
29, 1956, a total of 534,103 deaths was reported by the 108
major cities listed in table 4. This was 1.5 percent more than
the number of deaths (526,008) reported by these cities during
the 52-week period January 2 through December 31, 1955.

The chart on page 6 shows the number of deaths reported
in the major cities of the United States by week during 1956.
The outstanding feature in the mortality picture is the high
level of deaths beginning in March and continuing through June.
Excess deaths during the early months of the year have often
resulted from influenza outbreaks, however, the increase in
deaths for March through June of 1956 compared with the same
period of preceding years was not associated with a widespread
occurrence of influenza.

Again in the last 4 months of the year the level of deaths
reported weekly in 1946 was close to or above the maximum
for the corresponding weeks of the previous 5 years.

The cities in the West South Central Division reported in
1956 the largest percentage increase in deaths over 1955. Each
week, with only 6 exceptions, the number of deaths reported
in 1956 was above the 3-year median (1953-55) for that week.
A satisfactory explanation for this excess has not been made.

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL REPORTS

Malaria

Dr. J. D. Martin, Louisiana State Department of Health,
has reported a case of malaria in a 31-year-old woman who
spent the month of August in Mexico. During the last week of
her stay she became ill with diarrhea which continued until she
returned home. Other symptoms were chills and a high fever.
Plasmodium vivax was demonstrated by blood smear.

Psittacosis

Dr. Dean Fisher, Maine State Department of Health and
Welfare, has reported a case of psittacosis in a 56-year-old
man. This man became ill with sweats, chills, fever, and a
severe cough. The family owned a parakeet purchased in Flor­
da 3 years ago. The bird was apparently in good health until
about the time its owner became ill. Home treatment was ad­
ministered but the bird died and was buried. Several months later the diagnosis of psittacosis was made when a laboratory report on paired sera showed that the patient had in the past been infected with psittacosis.

**Tularemia**

Dr. James R. Amos, Missouri Department of Public Health and Welfare, has reported a case of tularemia in a 62-year-old woman. She was bitten on the finger by a sick cat which had been confined in a small building. It is known that the cat frequently killed and ate wild rabbits. The woman denied having handled any of the rabbits killed by the cat or any other rabbit or squirrel in years. A blood specimen from the cat was serologically positive for *Pasteurella tularensis* in a dilution of 1:40 and a specimen from the patient was positive in a titer of 1:640.

**Diphtheria**

An outbreak of diphtheria, in which cases were very mild or had no clinical illness, has been reported by the Highlands County (Florida) Health Department. During a 2-month period 6 cases were reported in a town of 5,000 inhabitants. Four were in a third grade class in school but the other two had no apparent association with the school. Only 1 of the 6 had any prior diphtheria immunization. All persons had positive cultures, typed as mitis virulent, without typical clinical symptoms.

**Salmonellosis**

Information has been received of the occurrence of an outbreak of salmonellosis in a school in Maryland. Of 664 persons served turkey dinners in the cafeteria, an estimated 150 became ill. This estimate was based on the number absent from school and the normal absenteeism, in addition to the number who became ill at school. The pupils developed moderate to severe abdominal cramps with sudden onset, and violent diarrhea from 10 to 26 hours after the meal. The turkeys, Government frozen surplus, were issued under a 36-degree refrigerator to thaw over the weekend. On Monday some of the birds were not completely thawed. At least 2 of them were tightly stuffed and the turkeys placed in an oven. After cooking, the turkeys were left at room temperature until

Continued on page 8

### Table 1. CASES OF SPECIFIED NOTIFIABLE DISEASES: CONTINENTAL UNITED STATES

(Numbers after diseases are category numbers of the Sixth Revision of the International Lists, 1948)

<table>
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<th>52d WEEK</th>
<th>CUMULATIVE NUMBER</th>
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<td>Since seasonal low week</td>
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<td>Brucellosis (undulant fever)-----</td>
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<td>Diphtheria, infectious----------</td>
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<td>Encephalitis, infectious--------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Typhus fever, endemic-----------</td>
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</table>

1Frequencies are too small.

NOTE.—One case of plague was reported in California for 1956.

SOURCE AND NATURE OF MORBIDITY DATA

These provisional data are based on reports to the Public Health Service from health departments of each State and of Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico. They give the total number of cases of certain communicable diseases reported during the week usually ended the preceding Saturday. Cases of anthrax, botulism, rables in man, and smallpox are not shown in table 2, but a footnote to table 1 shows the States making the reports. In addition, when diseases of rare occurrence (cholera, dengue, plague, relapsing fever—louse borne, typhus fever—epidemic, and yellow fever) are reported, they will be noted at the end of table 1.

Symbols.—1 dash [—]: no cases reported; 3 dashes [----]: data not available.
Table 2. CASES OF SPECIFIED NOTIFIABLE DISEASES: UNITED STATES, EACH DIVISION AND STATE, ALASKA, HAWAII, AND PUERTO RICO, FOR WEEKS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 1955 AND DECEMBER 29, 1956

(By place of occurrence. Numbers under diseases are category numbers of the Sixth Revision of the International Lists, 1948)

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<th>ENCEPHALITIS, INFECTIONS</th>
<th>HEPATITIS, INFECTIONS, AND GERMINOSIS</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rico</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The chart shows the number of deaths reported for 108 major cities of the United States by week during the past year. For comparison, the chart shows both the maximum and minimum number of deaths reported for the corresponding weeks of the 5 previous years.

The provisional figures shown in tables 3 and 4 were compiled from reports of the number of death certificates received each week in the vital statistics office of each city. The weekly count included all certificates filed for deaths occurring in the area, regardless of the date of death and regardless of the residence of the deceased.

Figures compiled in this way, by week of receipt, usually approximate closely the number of deaths occurring during the week. Differences are to be expected because of variations in the interval between death and receipt of the certificate. Whenever a holiday falls on the last day of the work week, the number of death certificates received for that week is usually low, while the number for the following week is high. The sharp fluctuations in October and November 1955 were caused when city vital statistics offices closed Friday October 12 (Columbus Day) and closed Thursday and Friday of Thanksgiving week.

When the data shown here are used to compare 2 cities or to compare 2 years for a certain city, consideration must be given to several factors. The number of deaths reported by a city generally varies with the size of its population, so that changes from year to year in the number of deaths may be due, in part, to population increases or decreases. In cities of the same size, the number of deaths may differ because of variations in the age, color, and sex composition of their populations. Some cities are hospital centers serving large numbers of persons from areas outside the city limits, and in some areas the hospitals serving the city are outside the city limits.

See the first page for a summary of mortality in 1956.

'Table 3. DEATHS IN SELECTED CITIES BY GEOGRAPHIC DIVISION
(Exclusive of fetal deaths)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>Week ended Dec. 29, 1956</th>
<th>Week ended Dec. 22, 1956</th>
<th>Percent change, median to current week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10,449</td>
<td>10,675</td>
<td>-6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England</td>
<td>748</td>
<td>706</td>
<td>-5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Atlantic</td>
<td>3,006</td>
<td>2,965</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East North Central</td>
<td>2,589</td>
<td>2,335</td>
<td>-8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West North Central</td>
<td>824</td>
<td>767</td>
<td>+7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Atlantic</td>
<td>762</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>+6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East South Central</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>-14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West South Central</td>
<td>779</td>
<td>824</td>
<td>-5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific</td>
<td>1,063</td>
<td>1,073</td>
<td>+0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CUMULATIVE NUMBER FOR 52 WEEKS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>1956</th>
<th>1955</th>
<th>Percent change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New England</td>
<td>35,075</td>
<td>35,570</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Atlantic</td>
<td>154,628</td>
<td>155,006</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East North Central</td>
<td>116,868</td>
<td>115,410</td>
<td>+1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West North Central</td>
<td>38,480</td>
<td>37,595</td>
<td>+4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Atlantic</td>
<td>41,318</td>
<td>41,129</td>
<td>+0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East South Central</td>
<td>24,403</td>
<td>24,213</td>
<td>+0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West South Central</td>
<td>43,125</td>
<td>42,312</td>
<td>+1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain</td>
<td>12,615</td>
<td>12,234</td>
<td>+3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific</td>
<td>64,938</td>
<td>64,810</td>
<td>+0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4. DEATHS IN SELECTED CITIES FOR WEEK ENDED DECEMBER 29, 1956

(Entries in column 4 are cumulative and are not comparable with figures in columns 2 and 3.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITY</th>
<th>52d week ended Dec. 29, 1956</th>
<th>51st week ended Dec. 22, 1955</th>
<th>CUMULATIVE NUMBER FOR 52 WEEKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>1955</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW ENGLAND</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston, Mass.</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>11,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgeport, Conn.</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1,791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge, Mass.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1,525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall River, Mass.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1,426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartford, Conn.</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2,435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowell, Mass.</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1,226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn, Mass.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1,032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Bedford, Mass.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1,167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Britain, Conn.</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2,301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providence, R. I.</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>5,206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somerville, Mass.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Springfield, Mass.</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2,141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterbury, Conn.</td>
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<td>38</td>
<td>1,538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worcester, Mass.</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>2,615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIDDLE ATLANTIC</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albany, N. Y.</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>2,514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allentown, Pa.</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>7,506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camden, N. J.</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2,024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth, N. J.</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1,434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erie, Pa.</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1,690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jersey City, N. J.</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>5,607</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newark, N. J.</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>4,978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City, N. Y.</td>
<td>1,645</td>
<td>1,592</td>
<td>80,647</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paterson, N. J.</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1,977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia, Pa.</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>24,490</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pittsburgh, Pa.</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>9,437</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading, Pa.</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>3,083</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rochester, N. Y.</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>4,915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schenectady, N. Y.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1,164</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scranton, Pa.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1,608</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syracuse, N. Y.</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>3,083</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trenton, N. J.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2,239</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utica, N. Y.</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>1,604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yonkers, N. Y.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1,531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAST NORTH CENTRAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akron, Ohio</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>2,766</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canton, Ohio</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1,872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago, Ill.</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>778</td>
<td>35,061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati, Ohio</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>7,987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland, Ohio</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>10,661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbus, Ohio</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>5,614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayton, Ohio</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>3,461</td>
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<tr>
<td>Detroit, Mich.</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>8,493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evansville, Ind.</td>
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<td>31</td>
<td>1,719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flint, Mich.</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Wayne, Ind.</td>
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<td>36</td>
<td>1,049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gary, Ind.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1,392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Rapids, Mich.</td>
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<td>37</td>
<td>2,107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indianapolis, Ind.</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>6,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milwaukee, Wis.</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>6,477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peoria, Ill.</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Bend, Ind.</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>1,270</td>
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<td>115</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>4,906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youngstown, Ohio</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>2,767</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEST NORTH CENTRAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Des Moines, Iowa</td>
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<td>61</td>
<td>2,606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duluth, Minn.</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>1,354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas City, Kans.</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1,576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas City, Mo.</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>5,635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis, Minn.</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>6,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omaha, Neb.</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>5,396</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Symbols.—parentheses [ ]: data not included in table 3; 3 dashes [---]: data not available.
the morning of the following day. No food samples were available for laboratory tests. However, washings of viscera cavities and samples of turkeys from the same lot and same plant are being tested.

Gastro-enteritis
Dr. Mason Romaine, Virginia State Department of Health, has reported an outbreak of gastro-enteritis in an elementary school. Of 168 pupils who ate lunch in the cafeteria, 99 became ill with nausea and vomiting from 2 to 4 hours later. Bacteriologic examination of foods served revealed the turkey salad to be contaminated with hemolytic Staphylococcus aureus. An investigation revealed the turkey had been received the middle of November and was kept in a deep freeze until boiled on December 13. After boiling, it was left overnight at room temperature and was deboned and made into salad the following day. Fresh homemade salad dressing was used.

Dr. E. A. Belden, Missouri Department of Public Health and Welfare, has reported an outbreak of gastro-enteritis following the ingestion of cream-filled doughnuts. Five persons in one family became ill from 2 to 4 hours after eating the food. The doughnuts were purchased from a bakery where the baker went home with a "virus" the morning the product was baked. Laboratory examination of the doughnuts revealed a nonhemolytic S. aureus. Illness was reported in another family of unknown size who ate doughnuts purchased from another store of the same chain.

Dr. S. B. Osgood, Oregon State Board of Health, has reported an outbreak of gastro-enteritis in a private residence. Three members of a family and their 4 guests became ill with abdominal cramps and diarrhea from 4 to 5 hours after an evening meal. In addition, 5 of the persons had nausea, vomiting, and prostration. Of 7 food items served, coagulase-positive, hemolytic S. aureus was isolated from both turkey and shrimp. The turkey was of a nationally known brand, individually packaged and frozen. The bird was allowed to thaw at room temperature for more than a day. Since both the turkey and the shrimp yielded the causative organism it is believed contamination took place in the home.

Dr. J. H. Paul, Hillsborough County (Florida) Health Department, has reported an outbreak of gastro-enteritis among 35 persons attending a lodge supper. Of these, 10 are known to have become ill with severe abdominal pain and diarrhea from 7 to 14 hours after ingestion of the meal. An investigation revealed the most probable vehicle of infection was Swiss steak and a sauce prepared the morning of the outbreak. It had been left unrefrigerated during the day and served around 7:00 p.m. Bacteriologic examination of foods including the meat were negative for pathogens.

Dr. Loren Rosenbach, Palm Beach County (Florida) Health Department, has reported an outbreak of gastro-enteritis among 12 persons eating a catered meal. An unknown number became ill from 3 to 6 hours later. Food ingestion histories indicated that the macaroni and cheese dish was the vehicle of infection but none was available for bacteriologic examination.