

March 17, 1950

### Transfers Planned

"While no definite decision has been made as to the future of the hospital's personnel," he said, "I have been given to understand that many of the employes will be transferred if they wish, to other veterans' hospitals in the metropolitan area.

"However, there are many employes of this hospital, both professional and maintenance, who have worked there seven or eight years, first for the Army during the war and later for the Veterans Administration. Many of these employes have bought homes here and may not wish to go to another borough.

"I have been advised by Dr. MacCurdy's office that the increase in patient load at the Willowbrook School for Mental Defectives, which will result from its occupancy of the rest of the buildings, will require the addition of several hundred employes to the school's payroll. He said that most of these will have to be recruited locally and that present employes of Halloran Hospital will be given every consideration. Dr. MacCurdy pointed out that employes of Halloran Hospital have been trained in their work and should be best suited for continued employment there under the state."

The borough president said he was advised that the state plans to begin occupying the hospital's buildings as soon as the government moves out, but that a number of the structures will have to be re-conditioned first.

Hall said he was not surprised at the Veterans Administration's decision to surrender the hospital.

"Congressman Murphy and the Island's veteran organizations did everything possible to have this

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the necessity for keeping the Halloran medical staff intact. In 1946, following the decision to sell Halloran to the federal government, but the VA was not interested. And last year, Congressman James J. Murphy introduced a bill to have the federal government purchase the area.

Now the state says there is a "pressing need" for the VA facility, to expand the Willowbrook State School for mental defectives.

The closing is expected to hit the community hard.

### \$6,800,000 Payroll

Covey, the assistant manager, said that the hospital's annual payroll is \$6,800,000, and another \$1,200,000 is spent each year on supplies and other items.

Nine in every ten employes are Staten Islanders, Covey said, residing on the Halloran grounds, renting apartments in the borough or owning homes here.

Some of that income may be retained here. Employes will be assigned to either the new Peekskill or Fort Hamilton hospitals, according to their choice and openings. The state school is expected to absorb a certain number, although not immediately, for there will be a time lag before the state facility is expanded.

Doctors and other medical personnel will be transferred to other VA facilities. Clerks, laborers and some trained technicians are the most likely transfers to the state institution.

How many will face discharge is not known at this time.

Asked for his reaction to the announcement, Covey said, "I've worked for the government for a good many years. This (New York State) is my home. But if the government wants me to work in Wyoming, South Dakota or anywhere else, I'll go. You don't permit your personal feelings to enter into it."

### Paraplegics to Kingsbridge

Paraplegics will go to the big Kingsbridge VA Hospital, while tubercular patients will be assigned to Batavia or Fort Hamilton hospitals.

Halloran's facilities were expanded only last year to care for 400 tuberculous patients.

One top VA official said the shut-down can be explained simply: "The state wouldn't renew our lease."

In pleading for retention of Halloran, VA officials had told the state that bed space at the Willowbrook institution was vital to the entire VA program in the city. Also considered a "major" reason was

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