

APPROVAL OF ACTION SEEN UP TO GOVERNOR

Representative of Gray
Reports VA Has Tried
For Year to Get Extension

By D. T. NUTT

The Veterans Administration will remain at Halloran Hospital if a new lease on the buildings can be obtained from the State of New York, Congressman James J. Murphy was advised yesterday in Washington by a representative of Veterans Administrator Carl Gray.

A spokesman for Gray told him, Murphy said, that the VA definitely would continue to occupy and operate the hospital if the lease were renewed. He further stated that the VA had been trying to get an extension of the lease for more than a year.

In Albany Assemblyman Edward V. Curry said this morning that, "this puts the question of Halloran Hospital's remaining on Staten Island squarely up to Governor Dewey."

The state, owner of the tract, is planning to use the Halloran building for expansion of the Willowbrook State School, a facility for the mentally retarded.

Resolution Introduced

Curry and State Senator John M. Braisted Jr. were successful yesterday in introducing a concurrent resolution before the Rules Committee of the Legislature, asking that the lease between the State of New York and the VA for the property now occupied by Halloran Hospital be extended for three years from July 1, 1950.

The Island's representatives in Albany expect the resolution to reach the floor of the two chambers for discussion today. They will be armed with Gray's assurances that the VA is definitely desirous of retaining the property.

Curry, Braisted and Assemblyman William N. Reidy will also attempt today to see Governor Dewey, who has been convalescing from a shoulder operation.

The Staten Island Chamber of Commerce has urged that the state's plans for Halloran, before depriving the Veterans Administration of this much-needed facility."

In Washington, efforts are still being made by Congressman Murphy to bring action on his long-dormant bill under which the VA would purchase Halloran from the state for \$24,000,000. Murphy has urged Islanders to write Representative John Rankin, chairman of the House committee on veterans affairs, asking immediate action on his Halloran bill.

Letter Campaign

Richard E. Daly, county commander of the American Legion and chairman of a committee guiding overall action by the borough's veterans organizations, said Island veterans and their organizations were being urged to write Gen. Gray, President Truman and Gov. Dewey, with a view to extending the Halloran lease.

Daly said no new meeting of Island veterans' leaders, together with others from Brooklyn, is contemplated at present.

Braisted, Reidy and Curry met late last week with Paul Lockwood, secretary to the governor, and said Lockwood indicated the state might sell Halloran to the federal government, if the sale price would enable the state to build another institution to care for the big backlog of mentally retarded children.

Halloran was built just prior to the start of World War II, at a cost of \$12,000,000.