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Doctors for Veterans

Confusion over the impending shut-down of Halloran has prevented any great consideration of the various Veterans Administration employe groups to be affected.

While retention proponents await Governor Dewey's review of the situation, there is time to study the problem faced by one of the VA's most important groups—the medical staff.

A letter writer brought this up when he noted:

"On Feb. 12 the Fort Hamilton VA Hospital in Brooklyn was opened. Large numbers of Halloran personnel applied for transfer there and were refused on the grounds that they could not be spared. Consequently, Fort Hamilton began to staff itself with new recruits to the VA or with transfers from outlying areas.

"These same 'indispensable' people from Halloran then found themselves suddenly 'available' one month later, but their places had already been filled in the interim."

It would seem that the VA handled this phase of its operation rather badly. Early this year VA spokesmen had told Governor Dewey that a continuation of the lease on Halloran was important for two reasons— to have bed space for veterans until a new hospital was ready on Manhattan's East Side; to keep a good medical staff intact.

Now both the ailing veterans and the medical staff are to be scattered... unless Governor Dewey agrees to an extension of the lease for a year or more.

This breakup of a team is important in planning for the needs of hospitalized veterans. It takes years to develop a perfectly coordinated staff and it isn't easy to recruit personnel for government work carried on in such a hit and miss manner.

Also to be answered is another criticism voiced by our correspondent: "...while practicing economy on the surface, thousands of dollars worth of new equipment were put into the Fort Hamilton institution, while the large and well-developed resources of Halloran go into storage pile."

Thus, there are many problems and issues to be discussed beyond the broad question of Halloran's retention. The status of the Willowbrook institution depends on the governor's review of the case, but it would seem that the VA should settle down to more careful and justifiable planning in meeting the needs of veterans in this area.

will be held tomorrow in the...
VA Aides Deny

Patient Exodus From Halloran

After consulting with Major Clarke Murphy sent another telegram to Governor Dewey, arguing that he renew the government lease on the hospital property so that the VA may cancel its plans to turn the hospital back to the state June 30, as previously announced.

His wire reads: "Thousands of war veterans in my district consider Halloran VA Hospital as an essential facility for the rehabilitation of former members of the armed forces.

Hardship For Veterans
 "Leaders of all veterans organizations, not only on Staten Island, but throughout the City of New York, have expressed the opinion that a refusal on the part of the State of New York to renew the lease on the Willowbrook property to the veterans administrator will result in the suffering of considerable hardship to 1,200 veteran patients through their removal, while bedridden, to other institutions. Further, a well-trained, efficient organization of hospital employes numbering 1,500 will be broken up and scattered.

"May I respectfully and earnestly appeal to you to authorize the extension of the lease to the veterans administration through 1952, or until convenient provisions are made for the care of the patients now at Halloran."

The newly-appointed members of the Willowbrook State School board of visitors—former Judge C. Ernest Smith, J. Joyce Klinger and Frank A. Pavis — plan to see Governor Dewey Monday. They will be accompanied by Leo D'A. Balbach, second district commander of the American Legion, and may take a few Republican Party workers with them.

Convalescents' Move To Fort Hamilton Called Routine

(Advance Washington Bureau)

WASHINGTON — Reports that patients are already being evacuated from Halloran Hospital on Staten Island despite a promise that no such action would be taken until Governor Dewey decides whether the state will renew the government's lease, were denied today by the Veteran Administration.

Advised by Island veterans that a number of patients were transferred from Halloran to a Brooklyn hospital this week, Congressman James J. Murphy immediately took up the matter with Major O. W. Clark, deputy administrator of the VA here.

"Major Clarke told me that no evacuation of patients at Halloran Hospital has started, nor will start until the governor has clarified the situation," Murphy said.

Routine Transfers
 "I was advised by the major that a few patients were sent to the new veterans' hospital at Fort Hamilton on Tuesday and Wednesday of this week, but these were cardiac cases in the stage of convalescence and their transfer was routine. The major said they would have been transferred even if Halloran Hospital were a permanent veterans' facility."

Murphy said he was assured again by Major Clarke that it will be several weeks at least before the VA will take any steps toward evacuation of the patients of Halloran Hospital and that by that time the entire situation should be cleared up.