

# Staten Island Advance

THE WEATHER: Clear and cool after dark; sunny and mild tomorrow.

STATEN ISLAND, N. Y., FRIDAY, APRIL 21, 1950

## HALLORAN TRANSFERS HALT AS NEW SETUP IS STUDIED

### Ban on Admissions Off During Change to Smaller Facility

By LES TRAUTMANN

Further transfers of patients from Halloran VA Hospital are being delayed and the ban on admissions has been lifted as officials work out details for the operation of a smaller facility.

Shortly after Governor Dewey told an Island delegation at Albany yesterday that the VA had been granted a lease on "about half of its present space" at the Willowbrook institution until Dec. 31, 1952, the VA announced in Washington that the "new" Halloran would include 740 beds.

Beds will be available for paraplegics, general medical and surgical cases and one pavilion will be set aside for tuberculosis patients.

Neuropsychiatric cases will be transferred to the Peekskill VA Hospital, which is now under construction and should be available next month.

868 Employees to Stay

Officials expect the retention of 868 employees. As of yesterday, there were 1,339. The difference will be reassigned to Fort Hamilton or Peekskill hospitals and officials expect "the normal attrition" of those who leave the field.



Jubilant Republicans surround Governor Thomas E. Dewey as he reads a statement announcing that half of Halloran VA Hospital's facilities will be retained for veterans' use. Left to right are Leo D'A. Balbach, second district commander of the American Legion; Assemblyman Frank McMullen of Brooklyn; J. Joyce Klingler, George W. Gatz, Republican County Chairman Edward A. Buppell, and Frank A. Pavis.

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It now appears that the VA will retain building No. 2, the main building with 580 beds and X-ray and other technical equipment; buildings Nos. 25, 27 and 29, which contain some 260 beds; building No. 32, the nurses home; present buildings for supplies, garage, shops and research; all temporary buildings and part of the structures now used for living quarters.

The VA will have to release buildings 18 through 23 which include wards for tuberculosis and neuropsychiatric cases and the mess hall. The building containing the auditorium is also a possible casualty.

Dewey made his public announcement after he met with Edward A. Ruppell, county Republican chief-tain; George W. Gatz, member of the GOP county committee; Leo D'A. Balbach, 2nd District commander of the American Legion; Frank A. Pavis and J. Joyce Klingler, members of the board of visitors at Willowbrook State School, and Assemblyman Frank J. McMullen of Brooklyn, whose district includes the new Fort Hamilton Hospital.

**Satisfactory, Says Dewey**

The governor said that he was happy that a "satisfactory agreement" had been reached between the state Department of Mental Hygiene and the VA. He noted that facilities will be provided for veteran-patients and for mentally defective children, for whom beds "are urgently needed."

The bed space provided under the new lease is only slightly less than the current patient census at Halloran. The census yesterday was 771, a decline of 536 since the VA announced last month that the state had refused to renew its lease.

A spokesman for the hospital said the decline in the number of patients could be attributed to three reasons—the transfer of small numbers of patients to Fort Hamilton, the ban on admission and the daily discharge of well veterans. Normally the turnover at the hospital is 20 to 25 patients a day.

Reaction to the pact was generally favorable.

Veterans Administrator Carl F. Gray Jr. said that since the state has an obligation to the children this is "a satisfactory solution to the problem."

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"The governor's action marks the culmination of many weeks of effort I have expended in an effort to retain Halloran Hospital on Staten Island.

"The solution arrived at, I believe, is the happiest that can be found to take care of the veterans' needs where other VA facilities are not yet available and which still help alleviate the desperate need for additional facilities for the state's mentally handicapped children.

"My thanks go to the men who have given so much of their time and effort in assisting me to attain our goal, including the fine support of my efforts by Borough President Hall. My deepest appreciation goes to Governor Dewey for his sympathetic treatment of the problem."

#### Legislators Pleased

The Island's three Democratic state legislators—State Senator John M. Braisted Jr. and Assemblymen Edward V. Curry and William N. Reidy—joined in the following statement:

"We are pleased to learn that Halloran Hospital would continue to operate as a veterans facility until the end of 1952.

"We should like to thank Governor Dewey and General Gray for their cooperation during the negotiations and our sincere thanks to all veterans and civic organizations who took part in the campaign to retain a hospital which brings comfort to the veteran-patients and employment to hundreds of Staten Island residents.

"Ever mindful of the demands on this state to care properly for our mentally ill, we feel that the buildings that have been returned to the state under the new agreement will relieve to a great extent the demand on the Department of Mental Hygiene for hospital facilities."

Balbach said the decision should satisfy all veterans in the state, and he praised Dewey for the decision.

#### Legion Chief Happy

Richard F. Daly, county commander of the Legion, said he was happy over the result especially "because everyone had a defeatist attitude at the start of the campaign."

The decision came after months of negotiations. Administrator Gray and Dewey had conferred on an extension of the lease in mid-January. Then the VA announced abruptly last month that the state wanted the buildings and refused to renew the lease beyond June 30.

Transfer of patients had begun with the objective of having all veteran-patients in other facilities by June 30.

#### Snee Post VFW Wants Retention Permanent

Although yesterday's announcement by Governor Dewey ordering the retention of approximately half of Halloran VA Hospital until 1952 was regarded by the members as a gain over the situation as it existed, Snee Post, Veterans of Foreign Wars, last night reiterated its demand that the hospital be made a permanent Island installation. The post met in Schull's Hall, Tottenville.

"We will keep after the situation," reported members. "until we know whether Halloran will be returned to the state or kept as a VA hospital."

Members, who stated that they will not be satisfied until Halloran is permanently retained on the Island, announced that a letter answering one of their communications had been received from Veterans Administrator Carl Gray. Gray had informed the post, it was reported, that no action could be taken on the hospitals' future status until Governor Dewey announced his decision.

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