

# Institutional Mental Care Need Is Told

**Willowbrook School  
Director Speaks at  
Rotary Club Session**

The need for extended institutional care of the mentally retarded to lessen the pains of "family tragedy" was stressed yesterday by Dr. Harold H. Berman, director of the Willowbrook State School, in a talk before the Staten Island Rotary Club.

Speaking in the Meurot Club, Berman said the birth of a mentally retarded child can be such a blow to parents that the stability and peace of marriage is threatened needlessly.

"It is to avoid these family tragedies, or to lessen their pain," Dr. Berman said, "that the Willowbrook State School exists."

The care and treatment of mentally retarded children in the infant stage is on an "experimental basis" at Willowbrook, which is a facility of the state Department of Mental Hygiene, Dr. Berman said.

## Demand Great

Only recently, he said, such care has been offered under state law to children below the age of five; the demand for admissions has always been far greater than the number of present facilities allows, he said.

More than 400 babies, ranging from crib cases to toddlers, are now under care at Willowbrook, while 121 children in all are being treated there. Yet, two mongoloid

type children occur in every 1,000 birth, and two out of every 100 children born each year are mentally retarded.

No fault lies with parents in such cases, Dr. Berman said.

"People wonder," Dr. Berman said, "why this has happened to them. I say it can happen in any family. If people understood this, the pain would be lessened."

## Range of Education

He said the school, which is designed to take advantage of capabilities, teaches children everything from how to eat unassisted to grammar school subjects, when these can be absorbed.

"All of us," Dr. Berman said, "regardless of position in life, have a level of adjustment. If we can find that level of adjustment, we can be happy and contented."

It is on this basis, he said, that the Willowbrook State School operates.

Earlier, former Municipal Court Justice C. Ernest Smith eulogized the late Elias Bernstein, attorney, civic leader and a member of the Rotary Club, who died Friday.

Smith praised Mr. Bernstein as an "outstanding attorney, a very

fine citizen and a fine husband and father."

"We will miss Elias Bernstein more and more in the years to come," he said.

The club members stood in silence for a moment in memory of Mr. Bernstein, who had been dinner speaker at the Rotary meeting a week earlier.

Dr. Berman was introduced by Manuel J. Johnson, Rotary program chairman. Philip J. Brown, president, presided.

**More Hospital Beds**  
The reconstruction of the Manhattan State Hospital has been under consideration for a number of years. When work is completed the bed capacity will be increased from 2,600 to 3,000. The budget makes \$12,000,000 available to start the reconstruction, an increase of \$8,000,000 over the previous appropriation.  
The budget also disclosed that \$2,150,000 will be needed to re-equip Willowbrook State Hospital on Staten Island, operated until recently by the Veterans Administration as Halloran Hospital.  
In addition to a reappropriation of \$3,370,000, the budget makes \$3,830,000 in new money available for building a medical-surgical building at Rochester State Hospital. The unit will provide quarters for 1,030 patients. Another appropriation provides \$2,075,000 to supplement a previous \$925,000 appropriation for a building at the Hudson State Hospital in Poughkeepsie, to care for tubercular-mental cases.