

STATEN ISLAND, N. Y., FRIDAY, JUNE 17, 1955

## Look at Staff Again, Willowbrook Is Told

ALBANY—(UP)—Dr. Arthur W. Pense, acting state mental hygiene commissioner, called today for a review of staffing requirements at state schools for mentally retarded children.

Pense made a 2,000-word report of an investigation into charges that five-year-old Catherine de Vole, of Buffalo, was "abused and neglected" while a patient at the Willowbrook State School on Staten Island.

"While I believe that the de Vole child received every reasonable care at the Willowbrook State School," Pense said, "it is my duty to bring to your attention that personnel requirements of the schools for the mentally defective are constantly becoming greater."

Pense said all allegations that the child had been physically abused "were checked into carefully."

PENSE said the child had been examined at the school before being discharged in custody of her parents, and had been examined by a department doctor less than 48 hours after leaving Willowbrook.

In both cases, he said, the examination showed that marks on the girl's body were not characteristic of welts or bruises

es which might result from abuse.

Her medical record, he said, supplies an adequate explanation for all aspects of her condition.

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## Willowbrook State School Stages 1st Commencement

Thirty-nine students who have completed the school's regular academic course took part in the first commencement exercises yesterday afternoon at Willowbrook State School.

They will receive further instructions in a specialized field. The graduation address was given by former Municipal Court

Judge C. Ernest Smith, president of the board of visitors.

The class was presented by Dr. H. H. Berman, director, and the diplomas were awarded by Mrs. Jacqueline S. Lyons, a member of the board of visitors. Mrs. Helen Kerner, vice-president of the Benevolent Society for Retarded Children, presented gifts to the graduates.