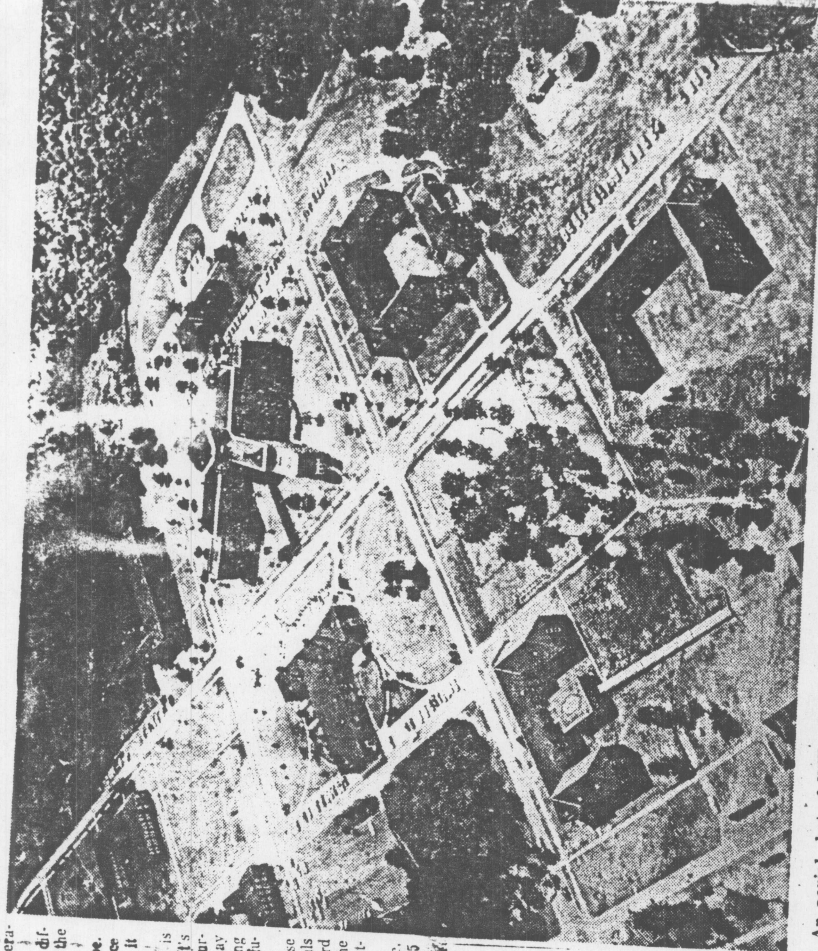


A Problem: What's Wrong With Willowbrook

By MARK WIENNER
(SIT OF FOUR ARTICLES)

Indirectly, they affect us all with a huge grin as he is session of periods of recuperation. Conditions at Willowbrook are playfully tugger along by a nun tion and relapse. First, there are plenty of how people feel during a period of Catholic in- It's a world which has a different scale of values than the State School. ton, and what they are willing. To brighter children it's outside world. to settle for in the way of care, school and learning and under- A youngster lacing his shoe. The wrong things — and standing life in a microcosm of. Something so commonplace that it's hard to think of it as an accomplishment. there's plenty of them — grab institutional world of Willow. To some children, it is an accomplishment. at the spotlight and the focus of brook is more than an institu-ession of pain. Sometimes, it's Yet, for some children, it is attention. home to 6,035 children and case of the youngster who must grounds for praise or encouragement. It's the helmeted in football head-agement, which in turn may ward to ward. It varies also in the and juring himself as he moves on a accomplishment far in the future. constant round of head banging. lure.

And for good reason. The intimate care of these The wrong things, or a combination of wrong things, resulted in three accidental deaths within recent months. Then followed a slaying. The accidental deaths resulted in a grand jury inquiry getting under way into conditions at Willowbrook. To a severely retarded child whose movements are a constant whirl of flailing arms and legs, Willowbrook is one are more disease prone than normal children and to some an attendant's salary is \$3,915. Willowbrook directly affect a patient population of more than 6,000 and a work force of 2,400. To the child, his face creased life is little more than a suc- a year.

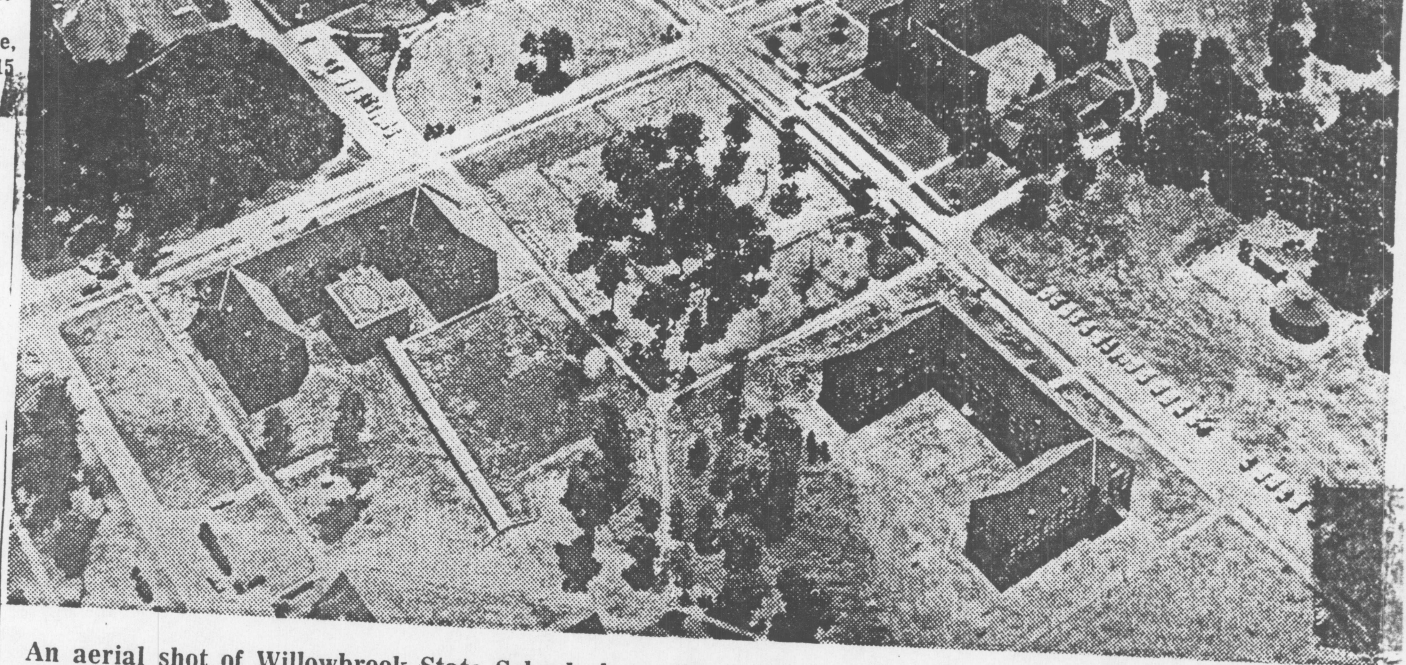


An aerial shot of Willowbrook State School shows the vastness of the institution whose 107 wards house more than 6,000 retarded. The institution has nearly 2,500 employees.



Children at Willowbrook State School are seen in a classroom setting.

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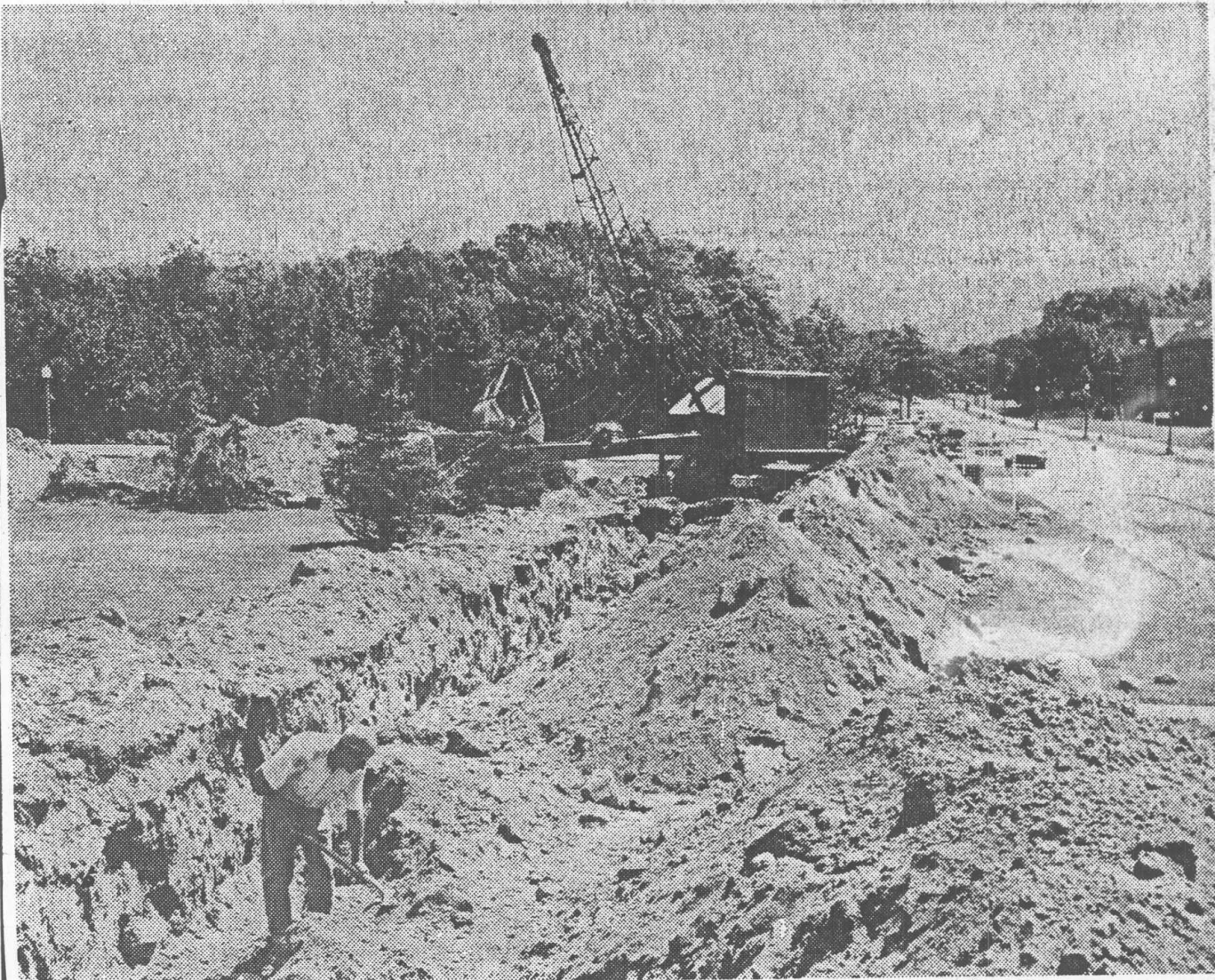
In the baby building, actually a complex of interconnecting buildings in which 1,000 children from the age of 1 to 5 live, youngsters get attention from Betty Melnichek of New Dorp, in the foreground, a college student working at Willowbrook for the summer; the head nurse, in the striped hat, and an attendant at the rear table.

S.I. Advance Photos by Barry G. Schwartz



The children swinging have an intelligence level that makes them almost unreachable. As brighter children are kept in the community, more and more Willowbrook is being filled with retardates for whom "nothing can be done."

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Ground has already been broken for a 21-classroom addition to the institution's school facilities as efforts are made to provide learning to all accessible youngsters.