

FINAL
EDITION

Dr. Hammond Defends Willowbrook Annex

Dr. Jack Hammond, director of Willowbrook State School, the institution on Staten Island described by Sen. Robert F. Kennedy as "filthy" and "zoo-like," yesterday found himself defending the conditions at Gouverneur Hospital on Manhattan's East Side, an annex of Willowbrook.

A highly-critical report labeled Gouverneur as a "fortress-like pile" and "hopelessly inadequate" for use as a hospital for the mentally retarded.

Dr. Hammond, who called Kennedy's report "exaggerated," immediately called a press conference to explain the conditions at the Manhattan hospital. It was the second such conference called by the director in two days.

According to Dr. Hammond, the Manhattan annex of the Island institution is well-staffed, suitable for the care of mentally retarded children and "fit" for hospital use.

He led newsmen around the hospital; explaining as he went that the 208 patients cared for there have better rehabilitation facilities than some of the facilities at Willowbrook.

The Manhattan institution, which is 67 years old, is leased by the state's Department of Mental Hygiene from New York City. It is staffed by 198 employees.

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MEANWHILE, it was reported that a four-month survey of state mental hospitals made last year by a team of three women came to the same conclusions as the senator.

The report, forwarded to Governor Rockefeller, has not been released officially. Sen. Kennedy has called on the governor to make it public.

In the report, the women, who had been assigned to the investigation by the state's Joint Legislative Committee on Mental Retardation, praised the Gouverneur operation.

"It is the hopeful, dedicated philosophy and attitude of the director (Dr. Harold Shiller) and his staff which sifts down to the very level of the attendant and results in better care for the children," the report said.

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DR. HAMMOND said the per patient cost at Gouverneur is about \$4,900, while the cost at

Willowbrook is about \$1,900 per patient.

Dr. Hammond again admitted there is overcrowding at Willowbrook.

Meanwhile the Department of Mental Hygiene, which has attracted criticism ever since Kennedy testified Thursday before the Joint Legislative Committee on Mental Retardation, found itself faced with other problems.

Dr. Christopher F. Terrence, acting commissioner of the department, said he would seek "a substantial increase" in funds to improve the care of children at state schools criticized by the senator. Kennedy pointed to Willowbrook and Rome State School as the institutions that most need change.

Dr. Terrence, however, supported Dr. Hammond and said Kennedy had "distorted out of all perspective" the conditions at the schools for the mentally retarded.

"We do hope that our critics will be as kind to us in January (when the Legislature convenes) as they are in September," he said.