

Rockefeller Orders Expansion at Willowbrook

Temporary Buildings Due at Mental Defectives' School

By JOHN SIBLEY

Governor Rockefeller yesterday ordered the erection of temporary, pre-fabricated buildings to relieve overcrowding at the Willowbrook State School for Mental Defectives.

He announced his decision after meeting with the institution's Board of Visitors, one of several stops on a day-long tour of Staten Island "to hear from the people themselves" on local and state issues.

The trip was the first of 15 one-day visits the Governor plans to make around the state before the year's end. Mr. Rockefeller, who has said he will seek re-election next year, appeared to relish every moment of it, grasping outstretched hands with the eagerness of a candidate and talking earnestly even with citizens who came to berate him.

'Pulse-Feeling Visit'

Although yesterday's tour was billed as a "pulse-feeling visit," Mr. Rockefeller lost no opportunity to praise the achievements of his administration.

He sharply denied that the decision to take immediate steps at Willowbrook was the result of recent widely publicized criticisms by Senator Robert F. Kennedy, Democrat of New York. Mr. Rockefeller said Willowbrook's director, Dr. Jack Hammond, had proposed the temporary buildings long before Senator Kennedy made his surprise visit to the institution in September.

The Governor said it had not been determined how many and exactly what kind of buildings should be erected. But he said he hoped the foundations could be laid before the frost set in.

Senator Kennedy had reported mentally retarded children at Willowbrook "living in filth and dirt, their clothing in rags, in rooms less comfortable and cheerful than the cages in which we put animals in a zoo."

Conservation Move Praised

Mr. Rockefeller began his tour at the city's new 61-acre High Rock Park Nature Conservation Center. The city recently took over the wooded area, a former Girl Scout Camp, from private developers who had started to bulldoze it to construct apartment buildings.

Standing before a fireplace in a pine-paneled lodge house, the Governor announced that the state would contribute \$900,000 to help the city buy the site, three-fourths of the total cost.

He said there was a community that dramatized the im-



The New York Times
Governor Rockefeller speaking on Staten Island tour.

portance of acquiring land, it's right here," Mr. Rockefeller told a gathering of conservationists.

Almost immediately the Governor encountered his first criticism of the day. Robert Hagenhofer, president of the Staten Island Citizens Planning Committee, rose to protest the proposed Richmond Parkway.

Mr. Hagenhofer said the state roadway would have a "devastating effect" on High Rock Park, an adjacent Boy Scout camp and a nearby golf course that the city might someday acquire.

Governor Fields Complaints

Mr. Rockefeller replied; "Burch McMorrin the State Superintendent of Public Works will be here this afternoon. You sit down with him, and it may be that something can be worked out."

"Let's face it. No one person or group of engineers has all the answers. That's why I'm here."

Other critics followed Mr. Hagenhofer in rapid order. When the Governor proudly mentioned the proposed South Shore Drive, a housewife rose to complain that the roadway was being built too close to the shore and was destroying the beaches for bathing.

Mr. Rockefeller's rebuttal was that the state was widening the beaches by dredging sand from the harbor bottom.

But this in turn brought a complaint from the Princess Bay Clam and Oyster Association, whose members said the dredging was destroying shellfish beds.

After a Chamber of Com-

Governor Runs Into Flurry of Citizen Complaints Here

merce luncheon, the dedication of a center for delinquent girls and the visit to Willowbrook, the Governor ended his tour with a public meeting attended by 250 citizens at McKee Vocational High School.

The meeting almost immediately became a complaint session, but Mr. Rockefeller showed no reluctance to deal with the flurry of protests.

When several housewives complained that a high-pressure gasoline pipeline was being laid on a highway right-of-way near their homes, he said:

"That's governed not by state regulation—they're Federal regulations."

When the women shouted they were getting "the same old run-around," he replied cheerfully:

"Now girls, I'd like to talk more on this, but there are others who have things to say."

On air pollution, the Governor commented:

"We need our neighbors over in New Jersey to work with us on this. I've written to the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare to call a regional conference on air pollution."

Negro View Heard

Miss Claire Simmons, a public school teacher, rose to state that she and other Negroes had found it "almost impossible" to find good housing on Staten Island. She said the State Housing Commissioner and the State Commission on Human Rights should set up offices on the island.

"That's a very important point," replied the Governor. "I'll check into that to see if it's possible to have an office here, even if it's only open two or three days a week."

There were several denunciations of the new state sales tax. Edward W. Thompson, a producer of mason and paving materials, said his competitors from neighboring New Jersey were shipping to Staten Island great quantities of materials on which no tax was being paid.

The Governor turned to his Commissioner of Taxation and Finance, Joseph H. Murphy.

"We're going to try to step up enforcement," Mr. Murphy promised, acknowledging that his office had received numerous complaints of goods arriving from New Jersey untaxed.

Mr. Murphy said the New York state police would soon begin stopping trucks on bridges to check cargoes and bills of lading.

Mr. Rockefeller spoke in defense of the sales tax at nearly every stop during the day.