

City Hospitals Deny 'Guinea-pig' Tests

By TOM O'HARA

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City hospital officials vehemently denied today charges that indigent patients have been subjected to untried drugs, unnecessary surgery and other "human guinea pig" experiments without their consent.

The charges were made on the floor of the senate in Albany yesterday by Sen. Seymour Thaler (D-Queens) in an hour-long impassioned speech that held his colleagues in spellbound revulsion.

Sen. Thaler charged that:

- Harlem Hospital treats children with deformed arms and legs "except when internes and residents are being taught surgical procedures—then the children are sent to surgery for removal of the limbs."

- Bellevue Hospital has performed biopsies on the livers of drunks and derelicts and five out of every 1,000 so treated die.

- Willowbrook State Hospital on Staten Island "took 500 mentally retarded children three to nine years old and injected them with a live hepatitis virus because officials wanted to start a hepatitis research program."

- At Harlem Hospital a pregnant, unmarried 23-year-old woman recently underwent a hysterectomy without her understanding what was happening, so the operative procedure could be shown to internes and resident doctors.

CALLS IT 'INCREDIBLE'

"It is the most incredible statement I've ever heard. It's beyond belief. It's not true," Dr. Anthony Shaw, chief of pediatric surgery at Harlem Hospital declared when told of the charge of removing children's arms and legs without medical cause.

Dr. Donald P. Swartz, director of gynecology and obstetrics at Harlem said: "Surgery is done for the patient's benefit and is not done to demonstrate techniques to internes or residents.

"No surgery is performed at Harlem without the patient's signed consent."

Dr. Jack Hammond, administrator of Willowbrook, stated that none of the inoculated children have died and said, "We're not using the youngsters because they are mentally retarded, but because hepatitis

is a particular problem at Willowbrook.

"We have the consent of every child enrolled in this program."

PRAISES PAPER

At one point in his speech Sen. Thaler praised World Journal Tribune reporter Seymour Spector and this newspaper for focusing public at-

tention on conditions in the city hospitals.

He promised to release documentation of his charges soon.

After he finished his speech Sen. Earl W. Brydges, Republican majority leader told the World Journal Tribune, "He has painted a sordid picture," and added it appears remedial legislation is necessary.



Associated Press Photo

SEN. THALER