

It's your opinion

Tuesday, February 8, 1972

Willowbrook news aids staff

It is unfortunate that a group of Willowbrook workers feel the news media exposure of the inhumane conditions at the school reflects on them. Actually the excellent coverage by the Advance and the Eye Witness News emphasized the fact that despite a severe shortage of help the attendants did a wonderful job under adverse conditions.

Thanks to the news media there will be more attention in the future to the needs of both the patients and attendants. The only repulsion anyone could feel is toward the Albany regime that places a priority on non-essential malls, cow barns and concrete highways over human beings.

RAY KACIK,

379 Sleight Ave.,

Tottenville, N.Y.

Friday, February 11, 1972

Willowbrook series lauded

Thank you, thank you for Jane Kurtin's efforts to improve conditions at Willowbrook. Just saw Geraldo Rivera's TV "Willowbrook — The Last Great Disgrace" and my 17-year-old just gave me the Feb. 3 issue of the Village Voice. I did not read her articles as I am a Queens resident, but read of her efforts in Joe Flaherty's Village Voice article.

Keep up your paper's good work.

S.J. BAYLE,

48-21 65th St.,
Woodside, N.Y.

Friday, February 11, 1972

Worker calls news slanted

What have you got against Dr. Hammond? He has lifted the conditions at Willowbrook from worse than a prison to a livable institution where the patients are trained to the best of their abilities. The 20 per cent budget cut and year long job-freeze levied by Gov. Rockefeller are the cause of the deteriorating conditions there—not Dr. Hammond.

Dr. Hammond had been pleading for help and no one listened. Now all of a sudden Dr. Wilkins is the savior of Willowbrook. His only aim is to oust Dr. Hammond as director — not alleviate present conditions.

No one on your paper has cared to look into the good points at Willowbrook, which far outnumber the bad. You don't care to check into the overwhelming improvements Dr. Hammond made there with such a limited budget. Dr. Hammond is a devoted man who's on duty 24 hours a day.

You have yet to get the opinion of any one of the over 2,000 employes, who by the way are all behind Dr. Hammond. You've given a completely biased opinion slanted towards Dr. Wilkins and a small handful of misinformed parents who hardly represent the more than 10,000 parents of children at Willowbrook.

I'm an employe at Willowbrook and I'm disgusted with the malicious slander you've printed against us. Why don't you wise up? Print the truth about Wilkins and Lee. We don't want them reinstated at Willowbrook.

MRS. D. RIZZO,

27 Wadsworth Ave.,
Fort Wadsworth

(Editor's note: We suggest that Mrs. Rizzo read the Advance's editorial of Sunday, Jan. 30. The editorial concludes with this statement: "The goal of this newspaper remains the same as it was weeks ago — the proper care of the patients and not the personality conflicts and the gimmickers. The community must continue to work toward that end; generally it has been responding very well.")

Tuesday, February 15, 1972

Many can aid at Willowbrook

I have always looked upon the Advance as an instrument to be used by the Islanders whenever they felt they had something to say that might benefit the community.

I am sure many Islanders have asked themselves the following question a numerous amount of times: "What can I do to help the misfortunate children at Willowbrook?" Every time I see that pitiful scene, or read anything about the conditions those poor children are surrounded with, I get furious. But at whom?

We are all to blame and I am tired of sitting and asking, "Who is to blame?" "What can be done?" is a more appropriate question. It really doesn't matter how Willowbrook got there, it's there. Now we have to do something to get it out of the pigsty condition and into a meaningful school for mentally ill children.

I have always believed in the motto, "Every little bit counts." I am sure there are some things that Islanders, like myself, can do. I know I would appreciate it very much if you would suggest ways in which we could help the children at Willowbrook.

KAREN CRISPINO,

61 St. Johns Ave.,
Rosebank